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## Retiree checks to rise modestly amid push to expand benefits

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Millions of retirees will get a modest 1.6% cost-of-living increase from Social Security in 2020, an uptick with potential political consequences in an election year when Democrats are pushing more generous inflation protection.

The increase amounts to \$24 a month for the average retired worker, according to estimates released Thursday by the Social Security Administration. Following a significant boost this year, the cost-of-living adjustment, or COLA, for 2020 reverts to its pattern of moderate gains.

But seniors and advocates complain that the inflation yardstick used to determine the annual adjustment doesn't adequately reflect their costs, mainly for health care.

The COLA affects household budgets for about 1 in 5 Americans, nearly 70 million people, and that includes Social Security recipients, disabled veterans and federal retirees.

Criticism of the COLA for-



In this Oct. 9, 2019 photo, Joe Schiavone, 81, is seen in his yard in West Melbourne, Fla.

Associated Press

mula has been amplified by Democratic presidential candidates and congressional Democrats. That's helped to shift the Social Security debate from a

near-exclusive concern with the program's solvency to a focus on expanding benefits, including but not limited to the cost-of-living adjustment. "Most of

the discussion about Social Security is about how can we promise more rather than how can we keep the promises we're already making," said conservative

retirement policy expert Charles Blahous, who as a former public trustee of Social Security once helped oversee its finances.

Continued on Next Page

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**Continued from Front**

With the COLA, the estimated average monthly Social Security payment for a retired worker will be \$1,503 a month starting in January.

Joe Schiavone, who retired from flooring sales and lives on Florida's Space Coast, says it feels like he's not keeping up.

"My biggest concern is that your money is buying less and less," said Schiavone, who's in his early 80s. "The figure that they use for the rise in the cost of living to me is very erroneous."

Schiavone points to increased health care premiums and copays, along with other kinds of insurance, as the main culprits. He expects that part of his COLA will be eaten up by an increase in Medicare's "Part B" premium for outpatient care, which hasn't been announced yet.

Roughly 1 in 2 seniors live in households where Social Security benefits provide at least half the total income. "None of the jobs I worked on in my life had any sort of pension or 401(k) plans," said Schiavone.

He's wary of politicians' promises about Social Security. "I very rarely believe what anybody says in a

campaign," said Schiavone. "I really don't know what to believe."

Democrats are working to convince older people they have their backs on Social Security. Voters age 65 and older went 53% for Donald Trump and 44% for Hillary Clinton in 2016, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of people who participated in its surveys and were confirmed to have cast a ballot. Now, Democrats are aiming to recapture older voters.

On the COLA, Democratic presidential candidates Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders are proposing to use a measure of inflation that reflects expenses for households headed by a person 62 or older. It usually outpaces the index currently used.

Their Social Security plans would also bolster benefits and raise taxes to keep the program afloat. In Congress, a major Social Security overhaul from Rep. John Larson, D-Conn., would also switch to a new inflation measure.

The White House had no comment on the COLA debate. Trump ran on a promise not to cut Social Security benefits. Republicans have



In this Oct. 9, 2019, photo, Joe Schiavone, 81, is seen in his home in West Melbourne, Fla.

Associated Press

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resisted expanding Social Security, pointing out it won't have enough money to pay full benefits starting in 2035.

Economists debate how to best account for inflation's impact.

Richard Johnson of the Urban Institute think tank said the measure Social Security now uses reflects workers, not retirees. "If the goal is to maintain seniors' living standards, then the cost-of-living adjustment is going to fall short if it doesn't measure seniors' spending," he said.

But former program trustee Blahous says even the

current inflation measure is too generous, because it doesn't take into account that when prices go up, many people look for cheaper goods. "You would be overpaying COLAs," he said.

Larson, whose bill has more than 200 co-sponsors, says he believes the politics of Social Security are changing because "reality has set in."

"Many Americans have not recovered their wealth and assets from the great crash of 2008," Larson said. "During that time, Social Security did not miss a payment. These benefits are essential

for their survival."

In addition to greater inflation protection, his legislation would improve the underlying benefit, particularly for low-income workers. It would extend Social Security's solvency by slowly raising the payroll tax rate from 12.4% to 14.8% and increasing the amount of earnings subject to the tax. Current law sets a maximum level of earnings that can be taxed — \$137,700 for next year.

Polling shows Americans have doubts about the future of Social Security. An Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research survey from February found that 39% of Americans had little or no confidence the program will offer the current level of benefits in five years. Just 24% said they were very confident it would, with another 36% saying they were somewhat confident. □

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## Polls show close divide over impeachment and removal

By HANNAH FINGERHUT  
WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans are following impeachment proceedings closely and are slightly more likely to approve than disapprove of the inquiry itself. But the public is more closely split over whether President Donald Trump should be removed from office. Several polls published since House Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced the start of an impeachment inquiry on Sept. 24 show a shift in views from earlier this year as the House of Representatives investigates whether Trump violated his oath of office in asking the government of Ukraine to investigate a political opponent.

**WHERE THINGS STAND**  
Polls find support for impeachment has shifted significantly from earlier this year. The public is now more closely divided after earlier polls showed major-

ity opposition to impeachment. A Fox News poll conducted Sunday through Tuesday found 51% of Americans now say Trump should be impeached and removed from office, up from 42% who said that in July. Likewise, a Washington Post-Schar School survey conducted in early October shows 58% of Americans are supportive of the decision by Congress to initiate an inquiry, including 49% who say Congress was right to begin an investigation and should also take the next step to remove Trump from office. Earlier this year, Post-ABC polls found less than half saying Congress should begin impeachment proceedings. And polls show that the shift was closely tied to Pelosi's announcement of the inquiry. An early October poll from Quinnipiac University finds 45% of voters say Trump should be

impeached and removed from office, up from 37% in a poll conducted immediately before that announcement.

### CONSISTENT (AND POLARIZED) VIEWS OF TRUMP

Approval of Trump's overall performance has remained steady, as it has over the course of his presidency. The Quinnipiac poll shows Trump's approval rating standing at 40%, where it was in its poll conducted just before the inquiry began. But, as with most political issues in today's environment, views of the Republican president and impeachment are intensely polarized. A wide share of Democrats express support for impeachment, while the vast majority of Republicans stand opposed.

### PRECEDENT

Today's presidential impeachment inquiry is only



President Donald Trump answers questions from reporters during an event on "transparency in Federal guidance and enforcement" in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2019, in Washington.

Associated Press

the fourth in U.S. history, and polling demonstrates different scenarios for how opinion has changed as impeachment proceedings proceeded. While opinions of President Bill Clinton and support for his removal from office moved slightly throughout 1998 and 1999, he emerged

largely unscathed. According to polling by Gallup, support for Clinton's removal reached no more than about a third of Americans throughout impeachment proceedings over Clinton's handling of allegations of his extramarital affair with Monica Lewinsky, a White House intern. □

# Florida men tied to Giuliani arrested on campaign charges

By MICHAEL BIESECKER, MICHAEL BALSAMO, DESMOND BUTLER and ERIC TUCKER

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Two Florida businessmen tied to President Donald Trump's lawyer and the Ukraine investigation were charged Thursday with federal campaign finance violations. The charges relate to a \$325,000 donation to a group supporting Trump's reelection.

Lev Parnas and Igor Fruman, associates of Rudy Giuliani, were arrested Wednesday trying to board an international flight with one-way tickets at Dulles International Airport in Virginia, according to Geoffrey Berman, the U.S. attorney in Manhattan. No destination was disclosed.

Parnas and Fruman were arrested on a four-count indictment that includes charges of conspiracy, making false statements to the Federal Election Commission and falsification of records. The men had key roles in Giuliani's efforts to launch a Ukrainian corruption investigation against Democratic presidential



This Facebook screen shot provided by The Campaign Legal Center shows, from left, Donald Trump Jr., Tommy Hicks Jr., Lev Parnas and Igor Fruman, posted on May 21, 2018.

Associated Press

contender Joe Biden and his son Hunter.

The indictments mark the first criminal charges related to the Ukraine controversy. While they do not suggest wrongdoing by the president, they are likely to add fuel to the House impeachment inquiry, raising additional questions about

whether those close to Trump and Giuliani sought to use their influence to affect U.S. foreign policy decisions.

Trump has dismissed the impeachment inquiry as baseless and politically motivated.

Records show that Parnas and Fruman used wire

transfers from a corporate entity to make the \$325,000 donation to the America First Action committee in 2018. But wire transfer records that became public through a lawsuit show that the corporate entity reported as making the transaction was not the source of the money.

Prosecutors also allege that Parnas urged a congressman to seek the ouster of the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine, at the behest of Ukrainian government officials. That happened about the same time that Parnas and Fruman committed to raising more than \$20,000 for the politician.

The congressman wasn't identified in court papers, but the donations match campaign finance reports for former Rep. Pete Sessions, a Texas Republican who lost his re-election bid in November. In May 2018, Parnas posted a photo of himself and his business partner David Correia with Sessions in his Capitol Hill office, with the caption "Hard at work !!"

John Dowd, an attorney for Parnas and Fruman, hung up on an Associated Press reporter seeking comment. Giuliani said he couldn't comment and that he didn't represent the men in campaign finance matters. The men were arrested around 6 p.m. Wednesday and booked at a local jail in Alexandria, Virginia. A court appearance Thursday was delayed as lawyers tried to work out a bail package. Kevin Downing, the lawyer who represented former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort on charges that he hid millions of dollars that he earned in Ukraine advising politicians there, was representing the men for their initial appearance and declined to comment.

Correia and Andrew Kushkin, a Ukrainian-born U.S. citizen, were also charged in the case.

Attorney General William Barr had been briefed on the investigation soon after he was confirmed in February, was updated in recent weeks and was made

aware Wednesday night that the men were being arrested, a person familiar with the matter told The Associated Press. The person spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss an ongoing investigation.

The indictment says Parnas and Fruman "sought to advance their personal financial interests and the political interests of at least one Ukrainian government official with whom they were working" and took steps to conceal it from third parties, including creditors. They created a limited liability corporation, Global Energy Producers, and "intentionally caused certain large contributions to be reported in the name of GEP instead of in their own names."

Prosecutors charge that the two men falsely claimed the contributions came from GEP, which was described as a liquefied natural gas business. At that point, the company had no income or significant assets, the indictment said.

Prosecutors allege that Parnas and Fruman conspired to make illegal contributions to try to skirt the limit on federal campaign contributions. The men are also accused of making contributions to candidates for state and federal office, joint fundraising committees and independent expenditure committees in the names of other people. The commitment to raise more than \$20,000 for the congressman was made in May and June 2018. The lawmaker had also received about \$3 million in independent expenditures from a super political action committee that Parnas and Fruman had been funding. A super PAC can raise and spend unlimited amounts of money in support of a candidate but isn't allowed to directly coordinate with the official campaign.

As a result of the donations, Parnas and Fruman had meetings with the congressman and Parnas lobbied him to advocate for removing the ambassador to Ukraine, Berman said. □

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ARUBATODAY**SAVE TIME  
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ONLINE****www.GroceriesToGoAruba.com****'Flash drought' brings dust and dread to Southern farmers**

By JEFF MARTIN

CARTERSVILLE, Ga. (AP)

— A furnace-like "flash drought" is intensifying as it blasts away the little moisture left across a vast swath of the South, wilting garden plants and raising alarm among farmers, according to a weekly report updated Thursday.

Nearly 56 million residents are now living in drought conditions in parts of 16 Southern states, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor report. That drought is classified as extreme in areas in Texas, Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, South Carolina and Florida. From the arid plains of Texas to farms in Maryland, concern is spreading that cattle, cotton and corn are suffering after a summer of record highs and very little rain.

One of the bullseyes marking the nation's driest areas points to Georgia's Bartow County — farm country northwest of Atlanta — where extreme drought has left pastures bare and kicked up buckets of dust. "If we don't get enough rain and the pastures don't recover, we'll be dipping into winter feeding hay before time, or have to liquidate some cattle," said Dean Bagwell, who has 350 cows now on land his family has farmed for nearly a century. Between the weather and relatively low cattle prices, he says "it just all plays into the frustration of trying to make a living farming."

The drought has ravaged the pastures where cattle and other livestock feed. Most of these fields are in either poor or very poor condition in Georgia, Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee, the Carolinas and West Virginia, the U.S. Department of Agriculture

reported in its most recent crop report. Pasture and range conditions are even worse in Virginia, where 71% of the land is in poor or very poor shape.

At Pettit Creek Farms in Cartersville, Georgia, where people come to see the kangaroos, camels and other wildlife, owner Scott Allen points out the "baked mud" and cracked earth in the bed of a small stream near his zebras. The natural spring water is nearly dried up, so he's using municipal water.

"It's been probably better than 60 days since we had any precipitation that amounted to anything," Allen said. "The dust is just relentless."

Thursday's drought report shows nearly half the population is experiencing drought in Texas, where the USDA crop report shows nearly a quarter of the cotton in poor or very poor condition. The situation is also dire in North Carolina, where 40% of the cotton and 30% of the corn is in poor or very poor shape. In Georgia, nearly 20% of the peanuts are in poor or very poor condition.

Forecasters blame the heat, along with the lack of rain: Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Florida all saw their driest September on record. Texas and Louisiana suffered through their hottest September on record, according to the report.

The combination of dry weather and intense heat can create what's now called a "flash drought."

The term came about during a 2001 drought in the Great Plains, when Mark Svoboda, director of the National Drought Mitigation Center, was looking for a way to describe its rapid



In this Monday, Oct. 7, 2019 photo, cracked earth is left behind after an ongoing drought dried up a stream at Pettit Creek Farms in Bartow County, Ga.

Associated Press

onset. The "flash drought" phrase resonated, making headlines in The Omaha World-Herald and beyond. Back then, Svoboda and other scientists had few tools to track flash droughts, but since then, satellite imagery has provided much better data to monitor a rapidly-spreading drought, he said.

The Drought Monitor has not adequately captured the severity of the drought's impacts on agriculture, Pam Knox, an agricultural climatologist at the University of Georgia, said at a Thursday briefing. Along with the challenges of feeding cattle and farming peanuts, algal blooms in water are becoming an

issue — they can be toxic to livestock. The drought has also given rise to armyworms and other pests that can damage crops.

Climate change in the coming years will likely only intensify droughts and increase their frequency, scientists warned in the National Climate Assessment released by the White House last year. And heat waves are expected to hit the South harder than other regions.

The cities of Memphis, Tennessee, and Raleigh, North Carolina, are particularly at risk of more intense and frequent heat waves, along with New Orleans and Birmingham, Alabama.

Bagwell and other farm-

ers are concerned that Octobers can be the driest months in the South. There's some hope, though, in long-range forecasts that point toward above-normal precipitation in the Southeast later this month, according to the Climate Prediction Center.

At the Tri-County Gin in Cartersville, one of the state's last remaining cotton gins, dust from the Georgia red clay coated a pickup truck, where the gin owner David Smith peered over the steering wheel and pondered the dry conditions.

"It's not a complete, overall disaster, but there are places that are hurting bad," Smith said. □

# ICE, sheriff say immigration ruling threatens public safety

By KEVIN FREKING and NO-MAAN MERCHANT  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The acting director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement on Thursday criticized a judge's ruling barring his agency from relying solely on databases that have at times led to the wrongful detention of American citizens.

Speaking Thursday at the White House, Matthew Albence called the September ruling an example of "judicial overreach" that threatened public safety.

Following Albence was a Texas sheriff who suggested the ruling would require releasing jailed immigrants who were "drunks" and would "run over your children," a comment that was immediately denounced by advocates.

U.S. District Judge André Birotte Jr. barred ICE from issuing requests known as "detainers" based solely on database searches considered to be unreliable. The ruling applies to states that do not explicitly authorize civil immigration arrests using detainers.

ICE cross-checks jail rosters around the U.S. with federal databases that track people's nationality and immigration status. When it detects that a person is unauthorized to be in the U.S., ICE will issue a detainer asking the agency to hold the person until he or she can be taken into immigration custody.

Advocates say relying on electronic databases alone to issue detainers is unreliable because they



Immigration and Customs Enforcement Director Matt Albence, right, accompanied by sheriffs from around the country including Tarrant County, Texas Sheriff Bill Waybourn, center, speaks in the Briefing Room at the White House in Washington, Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

often have erroneous data and can lead to falsely accusing people of being in the U.S. illegally.

Citing ICE's data, Birotte wrote that 42 detainers between May 2015 and February 2016 were explicitly lifted because the person was a citizen. Nearly 800 detainers out of almost 13,000 issued during that time were withdrawn because the person was a citizen "or otherwise not subject to removal," the judge wrote.

Asked about the detention of Americans, Albence said he could not speak about ongoing litigation.

"Many times, individuals that we come across that are United States citizens don't even know that they are because the laws

around citizenship are so complicated," he said.

President Donald Trump — as well as his top officials and allies — has long assailed judges who have ruled against his administration's efforts to restrict immigration and ramp up arrests and deportations.

Jennie Pasquarella, a lawyer with the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California, which helped bring the lawsuit, said the ruling was "critical to protecting the rights of everyone" and ensuring that ICE does not subject people to baseless arrests and detention.

U.S. immigration agencies earlier this year detained an American-born 18-year-old for more than three weeks even though he had

copies of paperwork documenting his citizenship.

A Democratic congresswoman from California visiting a Border Patrol processing center in South Texas in July encountered a 13-year-old girl holding a U.S. passport next to her mother, who had been accused of crossing the border illegally.

Albence spoke next to local sheriffs from around the U.S. who are cooperating with ICE. As the agency has faced resistance to its operations in some parts of the country, the Trump administration has held several White House events featuring local officials who support its immigration priorities.

Tarrant County Sheriff Bill Waybourn of Fort Worth,

Texas, said many unauthorized immigrants in his jail were accused of felonies like murder and sexual assault as well as drunken-driving offenses. He said Birotte's ruling "will put our communities in jeopardy."

"If we have to turn them loose or they get released, they're coming back to your neighborhood and my neighborhood," he said. "These drunks will run over your children, and they will run over my children."

Waybourn said about 7% of the 4,200 people currently detained in Tarrant County are in the U.S. illegally. His office issued a statement saying that nearly 25% of the unauthorized immigrants jailed in Tarrant County were accused of driving while intoxicated or being a DWI "repeat offender."

The sheriff also acknowledged that many people who cross the U.S.-Mexico border migrate "looking for a better day, for something better for their family."

Texas State Rep. Chris Turner, whose district includes Tarrant County, tweeted that the comments were "ignorant, irresponsible fear-mongering" in light of the August mass shooting in El Paso, Texas, where a gunman alleged to have targeted Mexicans killed 22 people.

Pasquarella said Waybourn's statement was "fueled by xenophobia and racism."

"They're applying this narrative they would never apply to citizens just because they're not citizens," she said. □

## Cracks were found in a key structural part on 38 Boeing jets

By The Associated Press  
Inspections of some older Boeing jets have turned up structural cracks in more than three dozen of them, raising a new safety issue for the company already dealing with two deadly crashes involving a newer version of the same plane. Boeing said Thursday that airlines worldwide have inspected 810 planes following an order from U.S.

safety regulators. Of those, 38 — or 5% — had "findings" requiring repairs.

Airlines are under orders to inspect certain Boeing 737 NG planes for cracking in a part that helps keep wings attached to the fuselage. Boeing declined to identify which airlines found problems, but Brazilian carrier Gol said it has grounded 11 planes so far, and U.S.-based Southwest Airlines

grounded two.

The NG is a version of the popular 737 that has been produced since the 1990s. Boeing is replacing it with the 737 Max, but those planes have been grounded worldwide since March after two crashes killed 346 people.

The cracks in the NG planes occurred in a part called a pickle fork because of its shape. Cracking in that

component was found recently in some 737s being converted from passenger use to cargo jets.

The Federal Aviation Administration gave airlines seven days, ending Thursday, to inspect 737 NGs that had made at least 30,000 flights. A much larger group of planes with slightly fewer flights must be inspected over the coming months.

An FAA spokesman said "a small number" of U.S.-based planes have been removed from service while Boeing works on instructions for repairing or replacing the parts.

The constant pressure and forces during flight can cause metal fatigue on planes, and it is not unusual for regulators to require inspections of a specific component or area. □



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## Killer of black man in parking dispute gets 20 years

By FREIDA FRISARO

A white Florida man who told detectives he was irritated by people who illegally park in handicapped spots was sentenced on Thursday to 20 years in prison for the fatal shooting of an unarmed black man outside a convenience store.

Circuit Judge Joseph Bulone called 49-year-old Michael Drejka a "wannabe" law enforcement officer and a self-appointed "handicapped parking space monitor."

Jurors found Drejka guilty of manslaughter in August. Drejka showed no emotion when the judge sentenced him.

Drejka confronted Markeis McGlockton's girlfriend Britany Jacobs in July 2018 for parking in a handicapped space at a Clearwater convenience store. McGlockton had gone inside the store with his 5-year-old son to buy drinks. As the confrontation continued, a customer went into the store and alerted McGlockton. Security video shows McGlockton leaving the store and shoving Drejka to the ground. Seconds later, Drejka pulls out a handgun and shoots the 28-year-old McGlockton as he backs away.

Initially, Pinellas County Sheriff Bob Gualtieri said he wouldn't arrest Drejka, saying the shooting was not a crime under the state's 'stand your ground' law, which allows someone to use deadly force if they believe it necessary to prevent death or great bodily harm. A security video from the store, however, shows



This Aug. 13, 2018 file photo provided by the Pinellas County, Fla., Sheriff's Office shows Michael Drejka.

Associated Press

McGlockton appearing to step back and turn away as Drejka fires the shot, which strikes McGlockton in the side.

McGlockton's family hired a lawyer and held a news conference demanding justice, while U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson asked the U.S. Department of Justice to investigate. Authorities later decided to charge Drejka. The judge said he found it most ironic that Drejka drove up, illegally parked next to Jacobs' car and then confronted her about parking illegally in a handicapped space.

"He just seems to come out of nowhere, kind of like a superhero, to see that he enforces the handicapped parking spot," Bulone said. Jacobs, along with McGlockton's parents, spoke before the sentencing.

"There are no words to fully describe what his loss has done to our family," said Jacobs, who had four children with McGlockton. "Our youngest two children will never have memories of their daddy." □

## Alaska Supreme Court hears youth climate change lawsuit

By DAN JOLING  
Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)

— An Alaska law promoting fossil fuel development infringes on the constitutional rights of young residents to a healthy environment, a lawyer told Alaska Supreme Court justices on Wednesday.

A lawsuit filed by 16 Alaska youths claimed long-term effects of climate change will devastate the country's northernmost state and interfere with their constitutional rights to life, liberty and public trust resources that sustain them.

The state's legislative and executive branches have not taken steps to lower greenhouse gas emissions and adopted a policy that promotes putting more in the air, said attorney Andrew Welle of the Oregon-based Our Children's Trust group.

"This is an issue that is squarely within the court's authority," Welle said.

Assistant Attorney General Anna Jay urged justices to affirm a lower court ruling rejecting the claims. Ultimately, the climate change issues raised by Alaska youth must be addressed by the political branches of government, she said.

"The court does not have the tools to engage in the type of legislative policy making endeavor required to formulate a broad state approach to greenhouse gas emissions," she said.

The 16 youths sued in 2017 and claimed damages by greenhouse gas emissions are causing widespread damage in Alaska. The lawsuit said the state has experienced dangerously high



Esau Sinnok of Shishmaref, Alaska, speaks at a news conference after the Alaska Supreme Court heard arguments Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2019, in Anchorage, Alaska, in a lawsuit that claims state policy on fossil fuels is harming the constitutional right of young Alaskans to a safe climate.

Associated Press

temperatures, changed rain and snow patterns, rising seas, storm surge flooding, thawed permafrost, coastal erosion, violent storms and increased wildfires.

Our Children's Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to protecting natural systems for present and future generations. The group in 2011 unsuccessfully sued the state in 2011, claiming the state failed to adopt measures to protect young people from climate change.

The judge in that case concluded that courts lack scientific, economic and technological resources that agencies can use to determine climate policy and it was best left in their hands.

Anchorage Superior Court Judge Gregory Miller rejected the current case a years ago.

Alaska has no state sales or income tax and historically has relied on the petroleum industry, which extracts crude oil and sends most of

it to West Coast Refineries, for much of its revenue.

Welle said state policy promoting fossil fuels, expressed in a state statute, should be declared unconstitutional because it harms young Alaskans by trading short-term financial gains for long-term health problems.

The lead client in the case, Esau Sinnok, has had his constitutional right to health and happiness denied by state policy and lack of action on climate change, Welle said.

"His home village of Shishmaref is literally wiped off the map because of climate change," Welle said before the hearing. "It's endangering his culture, the very existence of his community, the health and safety of him and his community members."

Justice Peter Maassen asked Welle if the energy policy was balanced by other policies in state law, such as protection for natural resources and the environment. □

# EU lawmakers reject France's nominee, deliver blow to Macron

By SAMUEL PETREQUIN

**BRUSSELS (AP)** — In a blow to French President Emmanuel Macron's ambitions, his nominee for the next European Commission was rejected Thursday by EU lawmakers assessing whether she was fit for the job.

Sylvie Goulard, a close ally of Macron, had been nominated to be part of incoming European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen's new team with a high-profile position overseeing Europe's internal market, industry and defense.

Goulard failed to convince European parliament members who quizzed her twice about allegations she misused funds and consulted for a U.S. think tank while she served in the EU Parliament.

Goulard, from Renew Europe, a pro-business group of parties in the European Parliament, is the third commission candidate to be rejected after lawmakers dismissed two over suspicions of conflict of interest.

In a statement released soon after she was rejected



European Commissioner designate for Internal Market Sylvie Goulard answers questions during her hearing at the European Parliament in Brussels, Thursday, Oct 10, 2019.

Associated Press

with 82 votes against, 29 in favor, and one abstention, the French presidency rued the perceived "political game" that led to Goulard's dismissal.

The Elysee said "her competence and her commitment to Europe are not questioned."

While acknowledging her

professional skills, many European Parliament lawmakers, known as MEPs, said Goulard was unable to properly address questions surrounding her workplace ethics.

"Throughout this process, Sylvie Goulard has had several opportunities to clarify the ethics questions hang-

ing over her candidacy, and she has not been able to rectify these," said Marcel Kolaja, an MEP from the Greens.

"The fact that she didn't seem to see an ethical problem with taking large amounts of money from a U.S. think-tank while being an MEP raises serious concerns for someone wanting to hold one of the most high profile jobs in the EU."

Goulard has denied any wrongdoing in a case dating back to her years in the European parliament from 2009 to 2017 in which she was accused of using funds to pay a legislative assistant who actually worked for her former party. She has not been indicted in a French investigation but resigned as French defense minister when it was opened two years ago.

She told lawmakers the issue was related to overpayments she made after the employee stopped working for her and vehemently denied wrongdoing. In September, she answered questions from French investigators.

"One can never be certain of what will happen, but normally I won't end up being charged," she said.

Meanwhile, Goulard was reportedly paid some 10,000 euros (\$11,000) a month for consultancy work for the Berggruen Institute, a think tank in the U.S., during 2013-2015. She says it was not illegal. After an initial hearing left many lawmakers asking for more explanations, Goulard had to submit written answers to a set of questions before she was quizzed again. □

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## Climate change activist climbs on plane, others stop traffic

Associated Press

**LONDON (AP)** — Protesters in New York City brought traffic to a standstill in the city's busiest hub and an activist in London climbed atop a plane as climate change demonstrators entered the fourth day of rallies around the world. Protesters transported a green boat on a trailer into Times Square and then sat down and refused police orders to move.

The boat bore the logo of the activist group Extinction Rebellion. It also had the words "Act Now" written on it and a string of brightly colored flags.

Some of the demonstrators

carried signs in the shape of orange rescue lifebuoys, with the words, "Save our Future."

The New York Police Department made dozens of civil disobedience arrests and removed the vessel some time later, which led to re-opened area streets and brought the traffic back to normal.

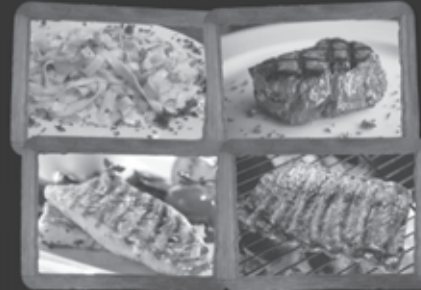
In London, a climate change activist scaled a British Airways plane at London City Airport. Extinction Rebellion identified the activist as a former Paralympic cyclist. A video streamed by the group showed the activist clinging to the fuselage. □



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## Turkey presses Syrian assault as thousands flee the fighting

Associated Press

**AKCAKALE, Turkey (AP)** — Turkish ground forces seized at least one village from Kurdish fighters in northern Syria as they pressed ahead with their assault for a second day Thursday, pounding towns and villages along the border with airstrikes and artillery. Residents of border areas within Syria scrambled in panic as they tried to escape on foot and in cars, pickup trucks and motorcycle rickshaws piled with mattresses and belongings, and the U.N. refugee agency said tens of thousands of people were on the move. It was wrenchingly familiar for many who only a few years ago had fled the militants of the Islamic State group.

The Turkish invasion was launched three days after U.S. President Donald Trump opened the way by pulling American troops from their positions near the border alongside their Kurdish allies. At a time when Trump faces an impeachment inquiry, the move drew swift criticism from Republicans and Democrats in Congress, along with many national defense experts, who say it has endangered not only the Kurds and regional stability but U.S. credibility as well. The Syrian Kurdish militia was the only U.S. ally in the campaign that brought down the Islamic State group in Syria.

Trump warned Turkey for moderation during its assault and safeguard civilians. But the opening barrage showed little sign of holding back: The Turkish



Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan speaks to his ruling party officials, in Ankara, Turkey, Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

Defense Military said its jets and artillery had struck 181 targets so far. More than a dozen columns of heavy black smoke rose above one border town.

A Kurdish-led group and Syrian activists said that despite the bombardment, Turkish troops had not made much progress on several fronts they had opened. But their claims could not be independently verified, and the situation was difficult to assess.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that so far, 109 "terrorists" were killed in the offensive, a reference to the Syrian Kurdish fighters. He did not elaborate, and reports from the area did not indicate anything remotely close to such a large number of casualties.

Erdogan also warned the European Union not to call Ankara's incursion into Syria an "invasion." He threatened, as he has in the past, to "open the gates" and let Syrian refugees flood into Europe.

Meanwhile, the Kurdish forces halted all operations against IS in order to focus on fighting Turkish troops, Kurdish and U.S. officials said.

The Syrian Kurdish fighters, along with U.S. troops, have been involved in mopping-up operations against IS fighters still holed up in the desert after their territorial hold was toppled earlier this year.

Ankara considers members of the Kurdish militia to be "terrorists" because of their links to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or

PKK, which has led an insurgency against Turkey for 35 years. The conflict has killed tens of thousands of people. The U.S. and other Western countries also consider the PKK a terrorist group.

Turkey considers its operations against the Kurdish militia in Syria a matter of its own survival, and it also insists it won't tolerate the virtual self-rule that the Kurds succeeded in carving out in northern Syria along the border.

The Turkish assault aims to carve out a corridor of control along the length of the border — a so-called "safe zone" — clearing out the Kurdish militia. Such a zone would end the Kurds' autonomy in the area and put much of their population under Turkish control.

Ankara has said it aims to settle 2 million Syrian refugees, who are mainly Arabs, in the zone.

Turkey began its offensive in northern Syria on Wednesday with airstrikes and artillery shelling, and then ground troops began crossing the border later in the day.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which has activists throughout Syria, said seven civilians have been killed since Turkey began its operation.

Mustafa Bali, a spokesman for the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, said their fighters have repelled Turkish forces ground attacks.

"No advance as of now," he tweeted Thursday.

But Maj. Youssef Hamoud, a spokesman for Turkish-backed opposition fighters participating in the operation, said the fighters captured the village of Yabisa, near the one of the main initial targets of the assault, the town of Tal Abyad, a spokesman for the fighters said. In a tweet, he called it "the first village to win freedom."

Turkey's state-run news agency said the allied Syrian fighters had also cleared and entered a second village, Tel Fander. It did not provide details. The Observatory said Turkish commandos entered the village of Beir Asheq. The Observatory said more than 60,000 people have fled their homes since Wednesday, while the UN-HCR estimated it at tens of thousands. □

# Ukraine leader: Predecessor trying to derail peace process

Associated Press

**KYIV, Ukraine (AP)** — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy accused his predecessor on Thursday of fomenting protests to derail a peace process for the country's separatist-held east and said talks with Russia were the only way to end the five-year war there.

Zelenskiy told reporters that Petro Poroshenko, the incumbent leader he defeated in April, was "pushing" people to oppose the withdrawal of heavy weaponry in eastern Ukraine, where fighting against Russia-backed separatists has killed more than 13,000 people since 2014.

"He is against the pullback and he thinks that he can spearhead another Maidan," Zelenskiy said, referring to the square in the capital of Kyiv where protests in 2013 and 2014 ousted a pro-Russian government and eventually propelled Poroshenko into power.

"We want to end this war. I don't think the previous government had quite the same desire," Zelenskiy said during an all-day "media



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy speaks during talks with journalists in Kyiv, Ukraine, Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

marathon" in a Kyiv food court.

Zelenskiy said he hoped his country's people would back his efforts to end the conflict with the separatists. Last week, Ukraine, Russia and the separatists signed a tentative agreement on guidelines for a local elec-

tion and a weapons withdrawal in the east to pave the way for a much-anticipated four-way summit with Russia, Germany and France.

Poroshenko and some nationalist groups have cast the move as a capitulation to Moscow, and several

dozen far-right Ukrainian activists and veterans traveled to the east this week vowing to stop the disengagement. Zelenskiy accused both separatists and veterans of trying to spoil peace efforts.

"As long as different people from both sides who don't

want the disengagement keeping coming there and do random shooting, there won't be any pullback," he said.

Zelenskiy emphasized that the weapons pullback was a key condition for holding the four-way summit, which has no date set yet.

The planned withdrawal of troops and weapons by both government forces and the separatists was to begin Monday but was delayed because of shelling from both sides. The pullback again failed in two locations in eastern Ukraine on Thursday, separatist officials said. In Kyiv, the military in charge of the operation in the east said one Ukrainian soldier died in shelling Thursday.

Ukrainian officials said a cease-fire must hold without violations for a week before they proceed with the weapons withdrawal.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Thursday he regretted the withdrawal hasn't happened and expressed suspicion that Ukraine might be looking to backtrack on the agreement. □

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## Romania's Social Democrat govt loses no-confidence vote



Romanian Prime Minister Viorica Dancila removes her glasses after her speech ahead of a no confidence vote in Bucharest, Romania, Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

By **NICOLAE DUMITRACHE**  
**VADIM GHIRDA**

**BUCHAREST, Romania (AP)** — Romania's Social Democratic government lost a no-confidence vote in Parliament on Thursday and the president is expected

to give opposition parties a chance to form the next government.

Lawmakers voted 238-4 against Prime Minister Viorica Dancila's minority government. The no-confidence motion needed 233

votes to be approved.

Most Social Democratic Party lawmakers abstained and three votes were annulled.

Opposition lawmakers accused Dancila and her ministers of mismanaging Romania's economy, letting public safety deteriorate and trying to politicize the country's judicial system.

President Klaus Iohannis described the Social Democratic government in a statement as "incompetent" and called its ouster a win for Romania. Iohannis, who is seeking re-election next month, also said he would begin consultations with opposition parties on Friday about forming a new government. Dancila said she intends to continue as the Social Democrats' candidate for president. □

# Super typhoon on track to drench Japan's main island

By MARI YAMAGUCHI

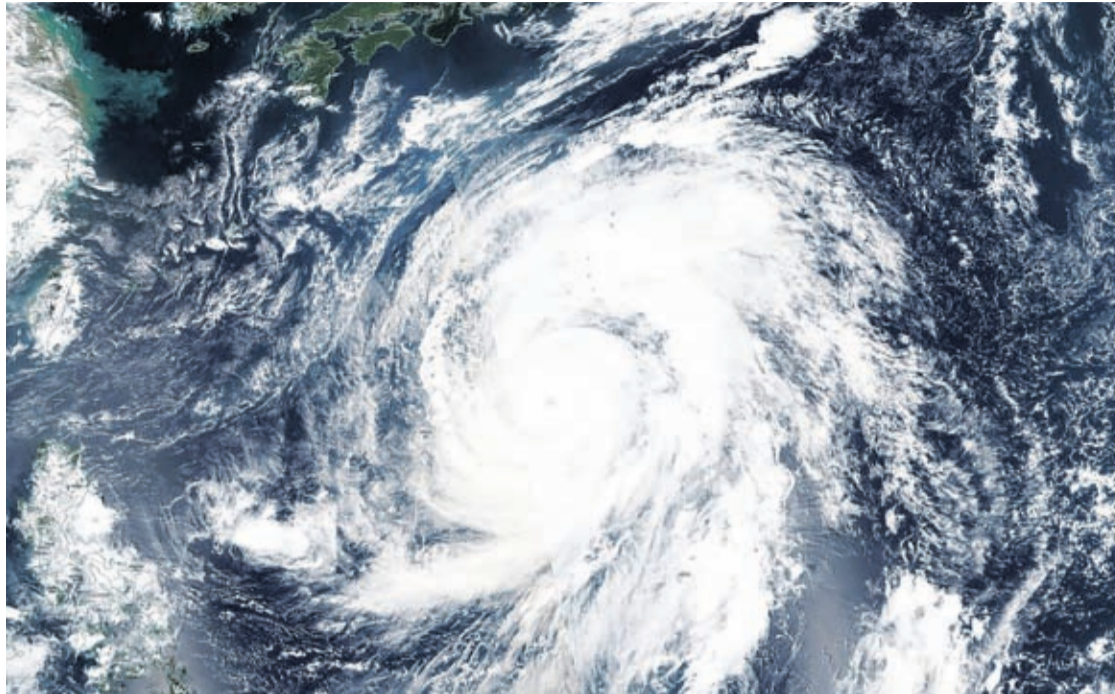
Associated Press

**TOKYO (AP)** — Japan is bracing for a super typhoon on track to hit central and eastern regions over the three-day weekend, with sport events and domestic flights canceled and sandbags given away to minimize potential damage from torrential rains and strong winds.

Typhoon Hagibis has already caused cancellations of two Rugby World Cup matches that were to be played Saturday. Organizers canceled the England-France match planned in Yokohama, near Tokyo, and New Zealand-Italy game in Toyota, in central Japan.

Organizers also called off a marathon in Sendai and other northern coastal towns. Formula One auto racing in Suzuka in central Japan may also be affected.

Japan's Defense Ministry scrapped the first two days of the annual Oct. 12-14



This Oct. 9, 2019, satellite photo taken by NASA-NOAA's Suomi NPP satellite shows typhoon Hagibis approaching Japan, top.

navy review.

Hagibis, which means speed in Filipino, had maximum sustained winds of up to 270 kilometers (168 miles) and stronger gusts at noon Thursday near Chichi island in the Pacific, about 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) off To-

kyo's southern coast. It was moving north at the speed of 20 kph (12 mph) and is expected to weaken over cooler waters as it nears Japan's main island.

It's the equivalent of a Category 5 hurricane. The Japan Meteorological

Agency says the typhoon is forecast to hit ashore in the Tokyo area late Saturday and urged people to take precautions to avoid potentially life-threatening danger. Japan's central Pacific coast may see torrential rains beginning Fri-

day while high waves and tides may cause flooding.

Airlines and train services anticipate cancellations affecting holidaymakers traveling over the three-day weekend that includes Sports Day holiday on Monday. All Nippon Airways said it is grounding all domestic flights Saturday in and out of Tokyo's Haneda and Narita international airports.

Depending on the typhoon's movement, All Nippon Airways and Japan Airlines said they may cancel flights as early as Friday.

The approaching typhoon is spreading fear especially in Chiba, near Tokyo, which was hit by Typhoon Faxai last month and many residents are still recovering from damage to their homes. The typhoon tore many electrical poles and snapped cables, triggering extensive outages that lasted for weeks, contributing to heat illnesses and other health problems among elderly people. □

Associated Press

# Amnesty International urges Malaysia to end death penalty

**KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)** — Amnesty International urged Malaysia's government on Thursday to keep its promise to abolish the death penalty, saying unfair trials and the use of harsh treatment to obtain confessions put people at risk of execution.

The rights group released details of nearly two years of research on 150 cases as well as interviews with prisoners' families, lawyers and embassy officials in a report that it said showed the use of the death penalty was "fatally flawed."

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's government promised shortly after taking power in May 2018 to scrap capital punishment, which mandates hanging as punishment for a wide range of crimes including murder, drug trafficking, treason, kidnapping and acts of terror.

But the government backtracked after public objection. Parliament, which resumed meeting this week,



Shamini Darshni Kalimuthu, Executive Director of Amnesty International Malaysia, speaks during a press conference in Petaling Jaya, Malaysia, Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

will instead remove mandatory death penalties for some offenses and give courts discretion in imposing the sentence.

The report said 73% of the 1,281 people on death row as of February were con-

victed of drug offenses, including 568 foreigners from 43 countries and many poor members of ethnic minorities. It said some prisoners were tortured and beaten to make them confess. In one case, a Malaysian

man detained in 2005 for possessing drugs and later sentenced to death had his finger broken by police, who also threatened to beat up his girlfriend, it said. Those who are poor often go without legal assistance

until they are brought to court, it said. Some were asked to sign documents in the Malay language that were not translated for them, according to the report.

The group said the pardon process was also not transparent, with no clear criteria and access to pro-bono legal services controlled by prison officials. It said half of the foreigners on death row didn't seek pardons.

"Our research found a pattern of unfair trials and secretive hangings that itself spoke volumes. From allegations of torture and other ill-treatment to an opaque pardons process, it's clear the death penalty is a stain on Malaysia's criminal justice system," Amnesty Malaysia director Sharmini Darshni Kaliemuthu said.

The group said its requests to meet Malaysian authorities including the police and officials in the attorney-general's office for more details were rejected or unanswered. □

# Amid perceived power vacuum, dozens vie to be Haiti's leader

By **DÁNICA COTO**

Associated Press

**PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)**

— Haiti's economy is paralyzed. Demonstrators fight police, block roads and loot stores several times a week. President Jovenel Moïse is avoiding public appearances. And dozens of people from political parties old and new are vying to become the country's next leader.

Opposition leaders range from a wealthy grocery-chain owner to a collection of veteran politicians with murky pasts, some with allegations of corruption and ties to organized crime. Despite unifying outrage at Moïse's political and economic mismanagement, protesters say the absence of a charismatic leader and a clear strategy is fueling chaos and the sense of an unending crisis.

Moïse still has more than two years left in his term after taking office in February 2017 and says he will not step down despite violent protests that have shuttered businesses and kept 2 million children from going to school for nearly a month. Nearly 20 people have died and about 200 injured in protests fueled by anger over corruption, rising inflation and scarcity of basic goods including fuel. With Moïse unyielding, the opposition disorganized and the international community on the sidelines, Haiti likely faces months or even years of dysfunction that's deep enough to cause widespread misery and political and economic free-fall without causing a government overthrow.

"It's a completely dysfunctional country," said Ben-zico Pierre with the Center for the Promotion of Democracy and Participatory Education, a Haitian think tank. "There's no trust in the institutions."

It's a concern that Carl Murat Cantave, president of Haiti's Senate, acknowledged in a speech televised Tuesday as he warned that Haiti's crisis is "rotting."

He urged Moïse to launch a dialogue and said all op-



Entrepreneur and youth leader **Pascéus Juvensky St. Fleur, 26**, holds up his copy of the Haitian constitution during an interview with the AP, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Tuesday, Oct. 8, 2019.

Associated Press

tions should be placed on the table.

"The country needs a genuine re-engineering so it can move forward because everyone is failing as a leader," he said in Creole. "Only the people right now have legitimacy."

Hours after Cantave's speech, Moïse's office issued a statement saying he has named seven people charged with leading discussions to find a solution to help end the crisis. Among them is former prime minister Evans Paul, who recently told The Associated Press that he believes Moïse has several options, including nominating an opposition-backed prime minister and shortening his mandate.

On Wednesday, opposition figures who are leading the protests rejected Moïse's statement, saying the commission has no credibility.

"A head of state who respects himself and who respects his people does not create, in times of crisis, a commission of negotiation with his advisers and his spokesmen. This is not serious," attorney André Michel told The Associated Press.

Michel was one of 70 candidates who participated in the presidential election of 2015, the same year he had his U.S. visa revoked for what he says are unknown reasons. He is now a mem-

ber of an opposition coalition called the Consensual Alternative, which is organizing the protests.

Also a member of that coalition is Senator Youri Latortue, a retired military official who is considered one of Haiti's most powerful politicians. He worked under former presidents Jean-Bertrand Aristide and René Préval and has denied corruption allegations including drug trafficking that the U.S. made against him more than a decade ago. Until recently, he led a party allied with Moïse's Tet Kale faction until he broke away.

"The president has shown he is incapable of governing," Latortue told AP.

He noted that a company once owned by Moïse was named in a Senate investigation that found that huge sums of money from a Venezuelan subsidized oil program were misspent during Haiti's previous government. Moïse has denied any wrongdoing. The investigation also named several former top government officials from the administration of President Michel Martelly, who preceded Moïse in office and is an ally.

Other members of the coalition include former Army Col. Himmler Rébu, who was accused of instigating

an attempted 1988 coup against a transitional government installed after former president Jean-Claude Duvalier was forced out, and Senator Sorel Jacinthe, a one-time Moïse ally who recently told local reporters that certain legislators accepted money to approve Moïse's choice for prime minister.

Joining veteran politicians in their call for Moïse's resignation is well-known Haitian businessman Reginald Boulos, a former doctor with no political experience who is vying to become president. "There is no way the president can ever recover his credibility, his legitimacy," Boulos told AP, adding that his goals if elected include the redistribution of wealth and a greater investment in agriculture.

Opposition leaders have created a nine-person commission they say would be responsible for overseeing an orderly transition of power and help choose Haiti's next leader, noting that the constitution calls for the head of the Supreme Court, who was appointed by Moïse earlier this year, to take over if a president resigns.

The leaders also have rejected any suggestion of dialogue, saying they want Moïse to step down immediately.

In her first public comments on Haiti's current situation, U.S. Ambassador Michele Sison told the AP that the country needs a functioning government that can address people's pressing needs. She urged all elected leaders, including Haiti's president, senators and deputies, to work together to identify and agree on a peaceful way forward.

"We're urging the various stakeholders to enter into dialogue in good faith, a dialogue launched and led by Haitians," she said.

Moïse also called for dialogue and unity nearly two weeks ago during a televised speech broadcast at 2 a.m., further angering Haitians. He hasn't spoken in public yet and only briefly appeared in front of a business called Nick's Exterminating last Thursday to shake hands with a handful of vendors in the capital of Port-au-Prince before his convoy sped away.

As protesters continue to clash with police, set up barricades and march through parts of Port-au-Prince and elsewhere in Haiti, many Haitians say they are eager to welcome a new leader but they also warn that they will keep an eye on them.

"They don't work for those who are weakest," said protester and activist Claude Toussaint.

Many demonstrators, such as entrepreneur Pascéus Juvensky St. Fleur, say the protests are not only about replacing a president, but changing a system that they say marginalizes many in a country of nearly 11 million people where 60% makes less than \$2 a day and 25% make less than \$1 a day.

St. Fleur tapped on a worn copy of Haiti's constitution as he said that Article 35 guarantees freedom to work and that only all Haitians together can bring about change.

"It's not one person, it's not one regime, it's not a president, it's not the opposition, it's not the bourgeoisie, but it's us who should do it," he said. "We dream of, and we want, a better Haiti." □

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# At least ten reef-associated shark species in the Dutch Caribbean



Caribbean reef shark in the Man of War Shoal Marine Park, Sint Maarten. Photo credit: Melanie Meijer zu Schlochtern

**WAGENINGEN, THE NETHERLANDS** — Wageningen Marine Research reported ten reef-associated shark species in the Dutch Caribbean in a recent published study as part of Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA)'s Save Our Sharks Project. The most common species are the nurse shark and the Caribbean reef shark. Overall, more sharks were observed in conservation areas than in unprotected areas, highlighting the importance of these zones in shark conservation.

More than 100 million sharks are killed each year as a result of fishing and shark finning activities, twice the rate at which they can reproduce. The demand for fins and other shark products has driven a number of species close to extinction. Sharks are especially vulnerable to overfishing and habitat degradation as they are late to mature and produce few young. The main threats to sharks in our waters are accidental bycatch, habitat deg-

radation and the risk of a shark fin market developing, which would lead to targeted fishing of sharks.

**We need healthy oceans and healthy oceans need sharks**

Sharks keep our oceans healthy. These top predators remove sick or weak members of their prey populations. A decrease in number of sharks leads to a disturbed natural balance in the sea. This can affect the overall fish population, and good fish stocks are not only important for fishermen that depend on fishing but also for (dive) tourism and the local community.

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Sharks are some of the most misunderstood species. For generations sharks had an undeserved bad reputation. People tend to see them as terrifying animals that pose a danger to everything that swims in the ocean, including humans. But we now know that is very far from the

truth; these magnificent creatures are essential to healthy oceans and risks to humans are small.

**DCNA's Save Our Sharks Project**

There is a lack of knowledge concerning the distribution and abundance of shark and ray species throughout the Dutch Caribbean. To combat this knowledge gap, from 2015-2018, DCNA ran the "Save our Sharks" (SOS) project for the Dutch Caribbean, funded by the Dutch Post-code Lottery. In this project DCNA collaborated with local fisherman and scientists and aimed to build popular support for shark and ray conservation amongst the local community, as well as increasing knowledge about shark and ray species within the region by conducting a number of research projects.

**Shark Research**

A recently published study by Wageningen Marine Research as part of DCNA's SOS Project established a

baseline for current shark diversity, distribution, abundance, spatial behaviour and population structure for inshore reefs around the Dutch Caribbean islands.

There were two methods used by the researchers to study sharks. One method used Baited Remote Underwater Video (BRUV) which used a device consisting of two cameras set in front of a baited feed bag. The idea is that as sharks come near the bait bag to feed, video footage can be collected to identify and count local shark populations. The other method was acoustic telemetry to track sharks. In this method, a small acoustic tracking device is implanted within the shark. Acoustic receivers are installed at specific locations, and whenever sharks with these transmitters travel near the receiver (within a range of 450 to 850 metres) they are recorded.

were conducted on Saba, Saba Bank and St. Eustatius to better understand the local population of sharks and rays and their relative abundances, and were funded by the Dutch Government. Starting in 2015, as part of the SOS project, additional studies were conducted to include the waters around Bonaire, Curaçao and Sint Maarten. In 2017 a BRUV survey was done at Aruba, financed by Global Finprint.

In addition, as part of the SOS project, acoustic telemetry was also used to better understand the movements of sharks, habitat use, migration and connectivity between islands. The telemetry study tracked two shark species, Caribbean reef shark (*Carcharhinus perezi*) and nurse shark (*Ginglymostoma cirratum*) around Saba (from 2014) and then around Saba Bank, Sint Maarten and Sint Eustatius (from 2015).

The first studies using BRUV

Continued on Next Page



Nurse shark on the Saba Bank which is part of the Yarari Marine Mammal and Shark Sanctuary. Photo credit: Hans Leijnse (SHAPE/DCNA)

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Continued from Previous Page

### Findings

In BRUVs deployed around Sint Maarten, Curaçao and Bonaire the most common detected shark species were Caribbean reef shark, with Sint Maarten also frequently showing nurse sharks. Overall, more sharks were observed in marine parks or areas of conservation than in unprotected areas, highlighting the importance of these zones in shark conservation. Furthermore, when comparing the BRUV surveys from Sint Maarten, Curaçao and Bonaire to previous BRUV studies from Aruba, Saba, Sint Eustatius and Saba Bank, it showed that the Aruba survey had the largest shark diversity (8 species) and the Bonaire survey the lowest (2 species). The Saba survey documented 5 shark species, Saba bank had 4 shark species with Curaçao, Sint Eustatius and Sint Maarten each registering 3 shark species. There was an additional BRUV submarine test at 300 metres deep off

Curaçao which found an additional shark species (Cuban dogfish). In total, at least 10 shark species were seen within the Dutch Caribbean in the different BRUV surveys.

The acoustic telemetry studies demonstrated that both the Caribbean reef shark and nurse shark have small home ranges and strong site fidelity. Large crossings between areas were rare, and found for two Caribbean reef sharks and one nurse shark which travelled between Saba and Saba bank. The two Caribbean reef sharks made short directed journeys back and forth, whereas the nurse shark after two years absence showed up at the Saba Bank before returning to Saba. One nurse shark from another study on the US Virgin Islands was detected in the network on the Saba Bank, a distance of at least 160 kilometres.

### Importance of Protected Areas

Both the BRUV and acous-

tic telemetry studies showed higher presence of reef associated sharks within the conservation zones, along with high site fidelity and small home ranges. Furthermore, as some longer distance movements were also documented, interconnectivity between

these areas is just beginning to be understood. The ongoing study on acoustic telemetry (funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV)) will yield more data on this. Therefore, not only are local marine parks crucial for the conservation

efforts of sharks and rays, but larger conservation networks, such as the Yarari Marine Mammal and Shark Sanctuary which comprises all the waters of Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius, are vital to protect entire populations. □



# Tierra del Sol Restaurant gets Incredible Makeover



**NOORD** — The Restaurant at Tierra del Sol will create a whole new look just for you! For that reason the restaurant will be closed for renovations which is due to be ready beginning of December. Do not worry to miss out on the delicious food though because lunch and early dinner can daily be enjoyed at the 19th Hole Bar at the pool from 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM.

In case you are a golf fanatic, playing on Tierra del Sol's 18th hole course is a must. The ONLY 18th hole golf course on this island has a uniqueness that is the reason to visit it. Added to that is an overwhelming nature and outstanding service. There is no way you can miss out on this experience. Imagine: a drive to the North end of the island where you encounter the island's rugged north coast and Blue Ocean forming your panoramic from a masterfully sculpted 18 beautiful holes of championship golf by Robert Trent

Jones II. Your play field combines the elements of wind, sea, and earth in perfect harmony. You may even encounter goats and the local burrowing owls named 'shocos'. Welcome to nature, welcome to the greatness of a new experience.

### After Game Delight

You can play your round of golf and then head to the 19th Hole bar at the pool for a nice relaxing lunch. Not a golfer? No problem. The food at Tierra del Sol stands out and is yet a reason to hop into your car and drive to that perfect picture landscape where the chef will pamper your tasting buds.

### Testimonials

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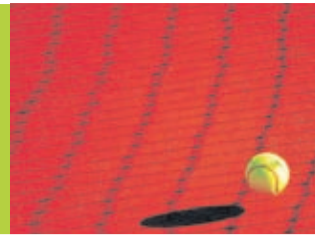
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# SPORTS



Toronto Raptors' Marc Gasol, center left, is defended by Houston Rockets' Austin Rivers during the first half of an NBA preseason basketball game Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019, in Saitama, near Tokyo.

Associated Press

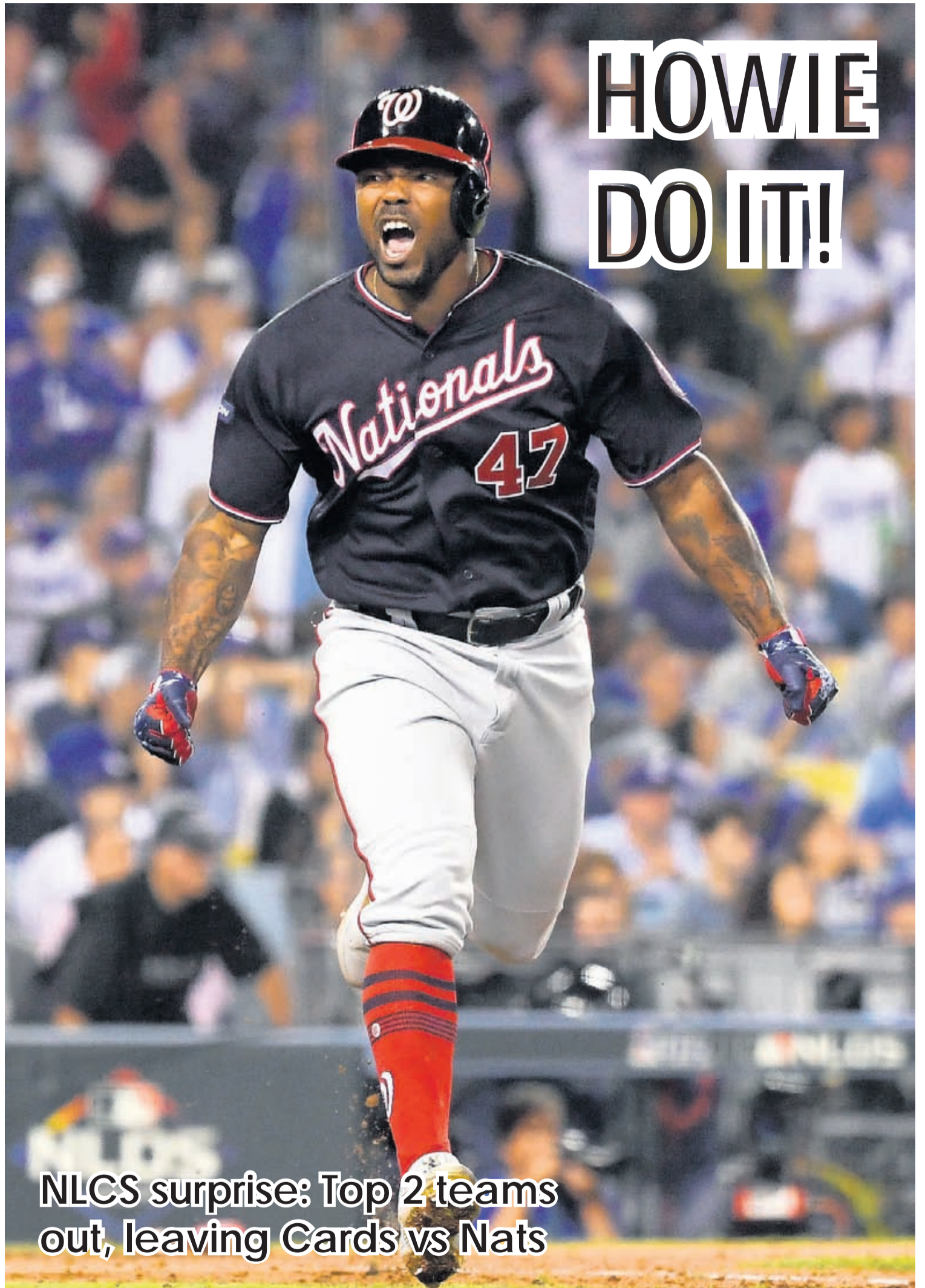
## Seen but not heard: Lakers, Nets, NBA are silent in Shanghai

By **TIM REYNOLDS**

LeBron James raised his arms in appreciation of the cheering crowd in Shanghai shortly after the final buzzer, then removed his headband and flipped it toward some ticketholders clamoring for a one-of-a-kind souvenir. He was seen.

He wasn't heard, though. Nor was any other player or coach in China, in an NBA game like none other. In response to the NBA defending Daryl Morey's freedom of speech, Chinese officials took it away from the Los Angeles Lakers and Brooklyn Nets. All of the usual media sessions that were to be part of the teams' preseason game on Thursday — including a news conference from NBA Commissioner Adam Silver and postgame news conferences with the teams — were canceled.

Continued on Page 22



# HOWIE DO IT!

## NLCS surprise: Top 2 teams out, leaving Cards vs Nats

Washington Nationals' Howie Kendrick celebrates after a grand slam against the Los Angeles Dodgers during the 10th inning in Game 5 of a baseball National League Division Series on Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2019, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press  
Page 20



Roger Federer of Switzerland prepares to hit a return shot against David Goffin of Belgium during their men's singles match at the Shanghai Masters tennis tournament at Qizhong Forest Sports City Tennis Center in Shanghai, China, Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019. Associated Press

# Federer joins Djokovic in Shanghai QFs

**SHANGHAI (AP)** — Roger Federer saved five set points in the first set as he scrambled to a 7-6 (7), 6-4 win over 13th-seeded David Goffin on Thursday and advanced to the Shanghai Masters quarterfinals.

Second-seeded Federer holds a 10-1 winning record against Goffin, including all three matches they've played this year.

Despite the outcome, Federer didn't feel in control of their Round-of-16 game.

"I never really felt like I had the upper hand over David today," Federer said. "I thought he took really a lot of good decisions, and he was super fast on his feet today, which I think made it really hard for me to get my freebies and winners off the baseline."

Federer will play fifth-seeded Alexander Zverev of Germany on Friday in the quarterfinals.

Zverev beat Andrey Rublev of Russia 6-0, 7-6 (4) in the last match of the night. The German served for the match at 5-3 in the second set, but couldn't nail down the victory until the tiebreaker. Earlier, John Isner served his 1,000th ace of the season but it wasn't enough to stop defending champion Novak Djokovic from advancing with a 7-5,

6-3 win. Isner's nine aces against Djokovic took him to 1,007 for the year.

Top-seeded Djokovic is on a 24-0 sets winning streak in Asia dating back to last year's Shanghai Masters. He won his inaugural appearance at the Japan Open last week without losing a set.

"It's always a big challenge returning the serve," Djokovic said. "He's got one of the biggest serves of all time."

Djokovic will play sixth-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece in the quarterfinals. Tsitsipas defeated Hubert Hurkacz of Poland 7-5, 3-6, 7-6 (5).

Third-seeded Daniil Medvedev continued his quest to reach a sixth consecutive ATP tour final after beating Canadian qualifier Vasek Pospisil 7-6 (7), 7-5.

Medvedev's frustration got the better of him when Pospisil led 4-2, 40-30 in the first set, which led to him smashing his racket repeatedly into the ground at the baseline.

"I usually don't like to do it, to break the rackets, because it's never beautiful," Medvedev said. "But it's true that sometimes it maybe can help to get some emotions out and get also the stress out." □



Netherlands' Frenkie de Jong, left, challenges for the ball with Northern Ireland's Paddy McNair during the Euro 2020 group C qualifying soccer match between The Netherlands and Northern Ireland at De Kuip stadium in Rotterdam, Netherlands, Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019. Associated Press

# Northern Ireland bid to stifle De Jong falls short

**ROTTERDAM, Netherlands (AP)** — Northern Ireland defender Paddy McNair snapped at the heels of Netherlands midfielder Frenkie de Jong for 93 minutes. It still wasn't quite enough.

Deep in stoppage time, De Jong sprinted past an exhausted McNair and into the heart of the Northern Ireland defense before laying off a perfectly weighted pass for Memphis Depay to score his second goal in 15 minutes and seal a 3-1 win for the Dutch in Thursday's European Championship qualifier.

It was a trademark De Jong move - gathering the ball while going forward at pace, looking around to assess where his fellow orange-clad players were and finding one of them with pin-point accuracy. The victory took the Netherlands, which did not qualify for the last two major tournaments, to top of qualifying Group C.

De Jong, the 22-year-old Barcelona midfielder who only made his international debut just over a year ago, has been at the heart of the resurgence of Ronald

Koeman's team.

It was a measure of the respect Northern Ireland had for De Jong that coach Michael O'Neill effectively posted McNair in his forward line just to shadow the rising star.

"Very much our game plan centered around trying to keep De Jong quiet," O'Neill said.

The tactic of stifling the Barcelona midfielder almost worked to perfection as Northern Ireland frustrated the Dutch for most of the night at De Kuip stadium and even took an unexpected lead when substitute Josh Magennis headed in at the far post in the 75th minute.

After Depay had equalized, it was De Jong who quickly placed the ball back on the center spot and urged his team to get a move on in the hunt for a winner.

De Jong arrived at Barcelona this season on a 75-million euro transfer following a standout year with Ajax, when his vision and pinpoint accurate passing from midfield helped lead the Amsterdam powerhouse to the Champi-

ons League semifinal and Dutch league title.

He is already making his mark in a midfield at Camp Nou long bossed by Sergio Busquets, the veteran with more than 540 Barcelona appearances to his name.

In an indication of a changing of the guard, De Jong was in Barcelona's starting lineup as holding midfielder and 31-year-old Busquets began on the bench for the 4-0 thrashing of Sevilla on Sunday, a switch allowed coach Ernesto Valverde to start Arturo Vidal in a more attacking midfield position.

Speaking ahead of Thursday's match, De Jong said he isn't doing anything radically different at his new club. "You play with different players, get into certain situations more often - that makes you better and, of course, you learn from it, that seems logical to me," he told Dutch daily *Algemeen Dagblad*.

Koeman complimented the prodigy for his staying power in the match in finally shaking off McNair.

"You see as the game progresses that he becomes more decisive and finds freedom," Koeman said. □

# Simone Biles wins 5th all-around title at gymnastics worlds

By JAMES ELLINGWORTH  
AP Sports Writer  
STUTTGART, Germany (AP)

— There was only one way for Simone Biles to finish off yet another dominant world championship performance. She dropped the mic.

Biles marked her fifth all-around world title by ending her floor routine with a mic-drop gesture — a nod to her social-media following. Biles said the idea came from Twitter, and it was certainly fitting on a day when no rival came close.

"It wasn't my best routine but we just thought it would be fun," she said.

It may not have been her best, but the routine still earned her the highest floor score of the day. One of the few blemishes was skidding out of bounds on the landing of a triple-double, a skill no other female gymnast performs.

Biles' fifth world all-around title, two more than any other female gymnast has ever managed, was won by a full 2.1 points. The margin of victory was bigger than any of her four previous victories at worlds and matched her 2016 Olympic win.

With another Olympic Games less than a year away, Biles feels on top of the world.

"I feel like right now actually I'm pretty confident in my gymnastics and myself and the performances I put out there, so I feel like I'm probably more confident going in today than I was at the Olympics," she said.

Biles' score of 58.999 was far out of reach for China's Tang Xijing, a late stand-in for a teammate who ended up in second after other medal contenders stumbled. Angelina Melnikova of Russia was third on 56.399.

Biles now has a total 22 world championship medals across all events, the most by any woman and one shy of Belarusian Vitaly Scherbo's men's record.

Biles' victory makes it seven wins in a row for the United States in the women's all-around, matching the So-

viet Union's record streak at world championships in the 1970s and 1980s.

Tang wasn't even meant to be competing Thursday but became China's first all-around medalist in eight years. She'd qualified third-best of China's gymnasts, with only two per country allowed in the final. However, Tang was drafted in to replace teammate Liu Tingting, who fell on two routines in Tuesday's team final.

Tang said she didn't know she was contending for a medal until after finishing her final routine.

"I hoped to do what I'm like in training, and didn't really think too much about the results," she said through a translator. "I didn't even watch the results myself, so

it was really surprising."

Bronze medalist Melnikova said she was "really happy" with making the podium after missing out last year by 0.034 points. It was her first medal in an individual event after team silver at the 2016 Olympics and the last two world championships.

Biles' U.S. teammate Sunisa Lee placed second in qualifying, but her hopes of a medal were dashed when she came off the uneven bars. She finished eighth.

"I feel like I kind of let the nerves get to me a little bit, but it's all part of the learning experience," Lee said. "There's going to be a lot more meets to come before the Olympics, so hopefully I can kind of get myself back together for that."



Simone Biles of the United States performs on the vault in the women's all-around final at the Gymnastics World Championships in Stuttgart, Germany, Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

France's Melanie de Jesus dos Santos had qualified third-best but fell twice on uneven bars and placed 20th. Ellie Black of Canada was on crutches after a

painful landing on the vault, and the 2017 all-around silver medalist faces a race to recover for Saturday's vault and Sunday's beam finals. □

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# Kendrick slam in 10th lifts Nats over Dodgers 7-3, into NLCS

By **BETH HARRIS**  
AP Sports Writer

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Howie Kendrick and the Washington Nationals got down again but were never out — and they finally ended their streak of playoff series futility in grand fashion. Kendrick hit a tiebreaking grand slam in the 10th inning and the Nationals, boosted by a lightning rally against Clayton Kershaw, beat the Los Angeles Dodgers 7-3 Wednesday night in Game 5. They advanced to the NL Championship Series starting Friday at St. Louis.

"I was hoping for any moment," said Kendrick, a 36-year-old veteran who was hitless in his first four at-bats.

In their first season since star slugger Bryce Harper left as a free agent, the Nationals became the first team in major league history to rally from three or more runs down twice in elimination games during the same postseason.

"It's not just one player, it's a team," left fielder Juan Soto said.

The wild-card Nationals won a playoff series for the first time since the team moved to Washington ahead of the 2005 season, and the franchise reached the NLCS for the second time in 51 seasons. The Nationals overcame a 19-31 start, finished 93-69 and then rallied from a 3-1, eighth-inning deficit to beat Milwaukee 4-3 in the NL wild-card game.

Then they bounced back from down 2-1 in the series against the Dodgers, who set a team record with 106 regular-season wins.

"Oh, man, keep fighting," Anthony Rendon said. "I think that's the story of maybe this organization."

Rendon and Soto homered on consecutive pitches to overcome a 3-1 deficit in the eighth against Kershaw, a three-time Cy Young Award winner. Soto had started the comeback from a 3-0 hole with an RBI single in the sixth off starter Walker Buehler and then hit a 449-foot drive halfway up the right-field pavilion off



Washington Nationals' Howie Kendrick watches his grand slam against the Los Angeles Dodgers during the 10th inning in Game 5 of a baseball National League Division Series on Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2019, in Los Angeles.

Kershaw, the longest home run of the 20-year-old's big league career.

Adam Eaton walked against Joe Kelly leading off the 10th, Rendon doubled on a drive that lodged in the left-field wall and Soto was intentionally walked.

Kendrick was 4 for 19 with one RBI in the series and had made a pair of errors at first base in the Game 1 loss. He fouled off a pitch and then hit a 97 mph fastball over the wall in dead center for his second career slam. The other was a game-ending, 11th-inning drive against San Francisco in August 2017. Cody Bellinger chased the ball all the way to the wall, putting his arms up against the fence as he ran out of room.

"It was electric. Probably the best moment of my career," said Kendrick, a 14-year big league veteran

who played for the Dodgers and Los Angeles Angels. "We never gave up. The city had faith in us. The fans had faith in us. We believed in ourselves, everybody came through for us."

Dodgers fans started exiting as the bases emptied, realizing their team's streak of NLCS appearances would not reach four.

"I'm looking in the crowd," Rendon said. "I'm enjoying it."

The seven-time defending NL West champion Dodgers remain without a World Series title since 1988.

"Disappointing is probably an understatement," manager Dave Roberts said.

Daniel Hudson got the win, retiring Will Smith on a drive to the right field warning track with one on and one out in the ninth, then getting Chris Taylor on a liner to center.

Sean Doolittle pitched a

perfect 10th for Washington, with center fielder Michael A. Taylor making a diving catch on Justin Turner for the final out.

The Nationals/Montreal Expos franchise won a postseason series for only the second time, the first since the Expos beat Philadelphia in a 1981 Division Series caused by the midseason players' strike only to lose to the Dodgers in the NLCS.

"I'm really excited for the boys in that clubhouse that fought all year," Nationals manager Dave Martinez said.

Kershaw sat on the bench after the home runs, looking forlorn, bowing his head and holding it in his hands. He has a 4.43 ERA in 32 postseason appearances, nearly double his superb 2.44 ERA over a dozen regular seasons.

"Everything people say is true right now about the

postseason," Kershaw said. The left-hander had replaced Buehler with two on and two outs in the seventh, and struck out Eaton on three pitches. Roberts didn't second-hesitate to stay with Kershaw in the eighth.

"He's probably the best pitcher of our generation," Roberts said. "It just didn't work out. There's always going to be second-guessing. I'll take my chances any day on Clayton."

Washington's Stephen Strasburg fell behind 2-0 after eight pitches. Joc Pederson doubled on a drive that went through an opening in the left-field wall — the crowd saw it land in the seats and thought it was a home run — but he was awarded the double after a video review. Max Muncy, who had been 0 for 12 against Strasburg, drove a fastball over the center-field wall.

Kiké Hernández homered on Strasburg's second pitch of the second inning, another fastball, for a 3-0 lead. Strasburg gave up three runs and six hits in six innings, struck out seven and walked one.

Buehler allowed one run and four hits in 6 2/3 innings before Kershaw came in.

There was a scary moment when Buehler hit Kurt Suzuki on the left wrist and the ball shot up and knocked off his helmet as the ballpark went silent. Suzuki fell to the ground, grabbing his face. He walked off his under his own power and was replaced by Yan Gomes, who moved behind the plate in the bottom half.

## WORLD SERIES

The Series will start in the American League ballpark because all the Astros (107), Yankees (103) and Rays (96) all finished with more wins than the Nationals or Cardinals (91).

## SLAMMING

Nelson Cruz hit the only previous extra-inning postseason slam, for Texas against Detroit in Game 2 of the 2011 ALCS.

## UP NEXT

RHP Aníbal Sánchez (11-8) is the most likely candidate to start the NLCS opener. □

Associated Press

# 10-spot: Cards oust Braves from NLDS with record 1st inning

ATLANTA (AP) — The St. Louis Cardinals turned the diamond into a giant pinball machine, dinging hits all over SunTrust Park.

By the time the Atlanta Braves finally got the third out, it was the most productive first inning in post-season history.

The Cardinals scored 10 runs their first time up and dealt Atlanta another playoff heartbreak, routing the Braves 13-1 in decisive Game 5 of the NL Division Series on Wednesday.

"That was crazy," said Marcell Ozuna, one of five players who batted twice in the stunning outburst. "We got a good opportunity — and we took it."

Before many fans had reached their seats, the Cardinals were already booking plans for the NL Championship Series, where they will face Washington in a best-of-seven set beginning Friday at Busch Stadium. The wildcard Nationals knocked off the favored Los Angeles Dodgers 7-3 in their own Game 5, getting a grand slam from Howie Kendrick in the 10th inning.

It will be St. Louis' first NLCS trip since 2014.

"We know we can beat anyone at this point," Kolten Wong said.

For the Braves, it might take a while to get over this debacle.

After pitching seven scoreless innings in a Game 2 win, Mike Foltynewicz retired only one hitter before getting yanked. First baseman Freddie Freeman booted a potential double-play ball that might have limited the damage. The Cardinals scored their final run of the inning on a strikeout — a wild pitch in the dirt that skipped away from catcher Brian McCann.

"We just strung together a bunch of great at-bats," Wong said.

It was Atlanta's 10th straight postseason round loss since its last victory 18 long years ago, tying the ignominious

mark set by the Chicago Cubs between 1908 and 2003.

Carrying on the tradition that started at Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium, moved on to Turner Field and is now becoming an annual occurrence at SunTrust Park, it was a visiting team that got to celebrate in the A-T-L.

The Cardinals broke out T-shirts and caps, hopped around in the middle of the infield and gathered on the pitcher's mound for a team portrait with the center field video board looming as a backdrop.

For the 13th time in 21 post-season appearances since moving to Atlanta, the Braves finished the year with a loss on their home field.

"It was more of a shock than anything," said Josh Donaldson, whose homer provided the lone Atlanta run. "You don't expect something like that to happen, especially with how well we played all season." The Cardinals batted around and got more than halfway through their order a second time before the Braves even came to the plate.

Tommy Edman, Dexter Fowler and Wong all had two-run doubles as St. Louis equaled the highest-scoring inning in postseason history, a record set by the Philadelphia Athletics against the Chicago Cubs in the 1929 World Series. It was matched by the Detroit Tigers (1968 World Series vs. St. Louis), the Anaheim Angels (2002 ALCS vs. Minnesota) and, now, the Cardinals.

No team had ever scored 10 runs in the very first inning of a postseason game. It was the first time the Braves franchise has allowed that many opening-inning runs in any game since they were in Boston on July 2, 1925, against the Brooklyn Robins.

The Cardinals made several changes after their



St. Louis Cardinals relief pitcher Genesis Cabrera waves his hat in the air as he celebrates with teammates after the Cardinals beat the Atlanta Braves 13-1 in Game 5 of their National League Division Series baseball game Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2019, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

10-spot in what might've been the first set of defensive moves ever made by a team before its opponent had batted. There was no need to worry about any more offense with budding ace Jack Flaherty on the mound, coming off one of the great second halves by a starting pitcher in baseball history.

"We took the crowd out of it," Fowler said. "We knew Folty would try to get ahead of us. We were trying to get some good pitches to hit. It was a little easier to see the ball today."

Manager Mike Shildt let the 23-year-old Flaherty throw 104 pitches over six innings, surrendering four hits for the first postseason win of his blossoming career. Flaherty loaded the bases in the fifth after drilling Ronald Acuña Jr. with a fastball, but induced an inning-ending groundout from Freeman. This one, though, will long be remembered for what happened before Flaherty even took the mound.

#### BLOW BY BLOW

Foltynewicz, who didn't walk anyone in Game 2, started ominously with a walk to Fowler. Wong followed with a sacrifice bunt — the only hitter Foltynewicz retired.

Paul Goldschmidt reached on an infield hit, and the

crowd stirred nervously when Marcell Ozuna lined another single to right to bring home the first run.

Then, the play that essentially finished off the Braves. Yadier Molina drilled a one-hopper to first that Freeman likely would've turned into an inning-ending double play if he made the scoop. Instead, everyone was safe when the ball deflected off his glove and rolled slowly toward second base to leave the bases loaded.

"This one is on me," Freeman said.

Matt Carpenter walked to force in a run and Edman ripped a two-run double to make it 4-0. After Paul DeJong was handed an intentional walk to re-load the bases, Atlanta manager Brian Snitker emerged from the dugout to call in 17-game winner Max Fried. Flaherty drew another bases-loaded walk and Fowler lined a two-run double down the left-field line to make it 7-0. Wong followed with yet another two-run double, pushing the score to a staggering 9-0.

Wong tagged and hustled to third on Goldschmidt's lineout to right. Ozuna appeared to end the inning when he flailed at a ball in the dirt for strike three, but McCann couldn't corral the wild pitch. The catcher

fell down picking the ball up near the backstop and threw late to first from his backside while Wong sped home.

McCann announced after the game that he's retiring.

#### TRAINER'S ROOM

Cardinals: After missing two weeks with a strained left hamstring, 2B Wong has held up well in his postseason return. "He feels great and hasn't really missed a beat," Shildt said.

Braves: 2B Ozzie Albies remained in the game after appearing to hurt his right hand while dropping a throw from SS Dansby Swanson attempting to turn a double play in the third inning. A trainer gave Albies' hand a quick examination during a pitching change.

#### UP NEXT

The Cardinals lost to San Francisco in five games at the 2014 NLCS, their last of four straight trips to the round. The NL Central champions went 5-2 against Washington in their 2019 season series.

After a second straight NL East title, the Braves head into the offseason with a solid nucleus of young talent but the burden of another postseason flop. Donaldson is a potential free agent, along with pitcher Dallas Keuchel, who struggled in his two NLDS starts. □

Continued from Page 17

It was the latest salvo in the rift between the league and China stemming from a since-deleted tweet posted last week by Morey, the general manager of the Houston Rockets.

"There will be no media availabilities for tonight's game between the Brooklyn Nets and Los Angeles Lakers," the NBA said in a statement Thursday, released a few hours before the game.

And there wasn't. They came. They played. They left. They didn't talk.

The game was held as scheduled, with James and Nets guard Kyrie Irving getting loud ovations when they were introduced as starters. But neither the U.S. nor the Chinese national anthem was played before the game, and no players addressed the crowd before tip-off in a departure from tradition before such international games. Fans arriving at the arena to watch — many of them donning NBA jerseys — were handed small Chinese flags to carry with them inside, and at least one person carried a sign critical of Silver.

The Nets won, 114-111. That is not why this game will be remembered. Virtually all corporate signage was removed from the playing surface and other spots in Mercedes-Benz Arena, fans carried tiny Chinese flags and some even painted

their country's colors onto the faces.

"If we have to choose, we will choose to support our country," said fan Ma Shipeng, who brought 900 miniature Chinese flags to hand out to fellow fans. "We only like some particular basketball players, but we don't like NBA anymore. I give away Chinese flags tonight, as I hope people to put the national interest in front of following NBA. I will continue to support James. But none of our Chinese people would accept what Morey and Silver said." Morey's tweet that showed support for anti-government protesters in Hong Kong has put a massive dent in the multibillion-dollar relationship between China and the NBA. And that tweet was why Chinese officials did not permit questions to be asked in Shanghai.

In Tokyo, it was the Rockets not permitting certain questions. After Houston finished its two-game preseason series in Tokyo against Toronto on Thursday, CNN reporter Christina Macfarlane tried to ask Rockets guards James Harden and Russell Westbrook if they would be hesitant to speak out about political or societal issues going forward after having seen the fallout from Morey's tweet.

A Rockets media official did not allow the question to be answered. The NBA



Los Angeles Lakers' LeBron James is blocked by Brooklyn Nets' Garrett Temple, right, during a preseason NBA game in Shanghai, China, Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019.

Associated Press

later apologized to Macfarlane, saying the Rockets' decision was inappropriate. "We've apologized to Ms. Macfarlane as this was inconsistent with how the NBA conducts media events," the NBA said. Other than the no-media-session mandate, the Lakers-Nets game was no different than any other game. Most seats were filled, and fans reacted as they would normally — oohs and aahs for good plays, applause for baskets, the loudest cheers coming whenever James touched the ball. It appeared most fans stayed until the end, even though James and fellow Lakers standout An-

thony Davis didn't play down the stretch and Irving left after just 66 seconds with an aggravation of a facial fracture.

"I understand that there are consequences from that exercise of, in essence, (Morey's) freedom of speech," Silver said at a news conference in Tokyo earlier this week. "We will have to live with those consequences."

There were many. Most events in advance of the game, such as NBA Cares events to benefit educational causes and the Special Olympics, were called off, as was a "fan night" where Lakers and Nets players were to inter-

act directly with some Chinese ticketholders. Signage in Shanghai to promote the game was ripped down, and mentions of the game were scrubbed from the arena website.

All that comes as many Chinese corporations suspended their business ties to the NBA. Chinese state broadcaster CCTV did not show Thursday's Lakers-Nets game and does not plan to show their next matchup at Shenzhen on Saturday. NBA broadcast partner Tencent has said it is changing its coverage plans for the league as well, and canceled credential requests in some U.S. arenas for pre-season games this week. □

## Johansson scores in OT, Sabres top Canadiens 5-4

**By The Associated Press**  
**BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP)** — Marcus Johansson scored 1:30 into overtime, leading the Buffalo Sabres to a 5-4 win over the Montreal Canadiens on Wednesday night. Jack Eichel scored twice and added two assists, and the Sabres improved to 3-0-1, the team's best start since opening the 2009-10 season 4-0-1. Rookie Victor Olofsson matched an NHL record in becoming the fourth NHL player to score first six career goals on the power play in a game Buffalo converted two of five opportunities.

Jeff Skinner also scored and defenseman Rasmus Dah-



Buffalo Sabres forwards Marcus Johansson (90), Sam Reinhart (23) and Jack Eichel (9) celebrate a goal by Johansson during overtime in the team's NHL hockey game against the Montreal Canadiens, Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2019, in Buffalo, N.Y.

Associated Press

lin had two assists, while Carter Hutton stopped 23

shots and improved to 3-0. Joel Armia scored twice

and added an assist in a game the Canadiens rallied from a two-goal, third-period deficit. Jesperi Kotkaniemi and Ben Chiarot, with the tying goal with 7:06 remaining, also scored for the Canadiens (1-0-2). Keith Kincaid stopped 34 shots.

The game was decided just as Montreal's Paul Byron exited the penalty box while serving a slashing penalty.

**FLYERS 4, DEVILS 0**  
**PHILADELPHIA (AP)** — Carter Hart stopped 25 shots for his first career shutout to lift Philadelphia past New Jersey.

Ivan Provorov scored for the Flyers, and so did Kevin

Hayes, Sean Couturier and Travis Konency as part of a three-goal third period in their home opener.

Hart shined in the Philly debut of new coach Alain Vigneault, securing the shutout in his 33rd NHL game.

Hart became the youngest goaltender in Flyers' history to record a shutout, at the age of 21 years, 57 days. He topped Dominic Rousel, who shut out Calgary on February 27, 1992, at the age of 22 years, five days.

**CANUCKS 8, KINGS 2**  
**VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP)** — J.T. Miller had a goal and three assists to lead Vancouver past Los Angeles. □

# Tough call: Is offense or defense worse for Dolphins?

By STEVEN WINE

AP Sports Writer

DAVIE, Fla. (AP) — Players who have outscored the Miami Dolphins this year range from A to Z, a commentary on a team with no O.

Nelson Agholor and 49 other players have more touchdowns than the Dolphins; Greg Zuerlein and 34 other players have more points. Of the 403 TDs in the NFL this season, the Dolphins have two.

All of which underscores, shall we say, the ineptitude of their offense.

And their defense might be worse. In four games Miami has allowed 163 points; the 1973 Super Bowl champion Dolphins allowed 150 in an entire 14-game season.

Give the 2019 Dolphins this: They're balanced. It's hard to say which unit is the biggest culprit in the team's historically bad start.

"There are a lot of things we need to do a better job on," rookie coach Brian Flores says. "There are a lot of places where we can improve just the basic fundamentals — tackling, catching the ball, blocking, communication."

The Dolphins are 0-4 because they've been outscored 163-26, the worst point differential through four games since at least 1940, and it has been a

team effort.

They're on pace to give up 652 points, which would shatter the record of 533 allowed by the 1981 Baltimore Colts. They're on pace to score 104 points, well under the record low for a 16-game season set in 1992 when the Seattle Seahawks totaled 140.

Such awfulness might be tough to sustain Sunday, when Miami faces the equally winless Washington Redskins. But Flores isn't exactly talking up his team's chances.

"Look, this is the National Football League," he says. "Every team poses problems and issues, and every game is tough."

That's especially true for Miami, which is so bad that Washington (0-5) is favored for the first time this season. On offense, the Dolphins have showed they can stop themselves both on the ground and through the air. They have yet to score a rushing touchdown, and their longest run has been 11 yards. Fifteen NFL quarterbacks and five receivers have longer runs.

When Miami tries to throw, Josh Rosen ranks 34th in the league in passer rating, completion percentage and touchdown passes, even though there are only 32 teams.

As for defense, last year the



Los Angeles Chargers defensive back Desmond King (20) tackles Miami Dolphins quarterback Josh Rosen (3), during the second half at an NFL football game, Sunday, Sept. 29, 2019, in Miami Gardens, Fla.

Associated Press

Dolphins gave up a franchise-record 6,257 yards. This year they're on pace to allow 7,552, which would be a league record. Opponents are converting 58 percent of their third downs and have a passer rating of 137.6, higher than the rating by any NFL quarterback.

In short, no other team has so many ways to get beat. It's the opposite of what Miami's offense and defense strive for.

"We preach all the time that like we have to pick each other up, we have to play as a team," Rosen

says. "When the offense is in rhythm and the defense is getting three-and-outs, you can kind of keep that rhythm going. They always play into each other."

That's for better or worse. Miami's offense ranks last or next to last in the league in yards per game, yards per play, rushing yards per game, rushing yards per carry, passing yards per game, passing yards per play, first downs and interception percentage.

The defense ranks last or next to last in yards per game, yards per play, rushing yards per game,

passing yards per game, passing yards per play, first downs and third down efficiency.

Safety Bobby McCain says a spark by either unit — a couple of quick touchdowns or takeaways — would give the entire team a boost.

"That would be big," McCain says. "You definitely can feed off each other. The offense can feed off defense, and the main thing that people don't talk about is the kicking game. Special teams — you can feed off that tremendously." □

## Boxer Errol Spence seriously injured in Dallas Ferrari crash

DALLAS (AP) — Welterweight boxing champion Errol Spence Jr. crashed a speeding Ferrari in Dallas early Thursday and was badly injured but is expected to survive, police said.

The crash happened just before 3 a.m., when Spence's Ferrari crossed a median into oncoming traffic and flipped over several times, ejecting Spence, who wasn't wearing a seatbelt, police said. Spence was taken to a hospital and placed in the intensive care unit.

"Spence is awake and responding and his condi-

tion is listed as stable. He did not sustain any broken bones or fractures but has some facial lacerations. He is expected to make a full recovery," the Spence family said in a statement Thursday evening.

Police said they're still investigating the cause of the crash, but they noted that the Ferrari was speeding at the time.

Last month, the 2012 U.S. Olympian added the WBC welterweight title to his IBF strap with a thrilling split-decision victory over Shawn Porter in Los Angeles.

With his rangy athleticism

and virtuosic skill, Spence, who is 26-0 with 21 knockouts, has captured fans with a series of crisp victories in recent years. He won the IBF title in 2017 by stopping Kell Brook in England, and he defended it three times, culminating in a one-sided thrashing of undersized Mikey Garcia in March. Spence, 29, emerged victorious from his bout with the veteran brawler Porter (30-3-1), which featured several wild exchanges and had the Staples Center crowd of 16,702 on its feet throughout the 12th round and roaring for both fight-



In this Sept. 28, 2019, file photo, Errol Spence Jr., center, celebrates his victory over Shawn Porter during the WBC & IBF World Welterweight Championship boxing match in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

ers when they embraced after the final bell.

Heading into the fight in which he was a heavy favorite, Spence had a lot of attractive options ahead,

including a possible fight with the resurgent Manny Pacquiao and a potential bout with fellow unbeaten champion Terrence Crawford after that. □

# U.S. seeks to blacklist Chinese artificial intelligence firms

By **MATT O'BRIEN**  
AP Technology Writer

The United States is blacklisting a group of Chinese tech companies that develop facial recognition and other artificial intelligence technology that the U.S. says is being used to repress China's Muslim minority groups.

A move Monday by the U.S. Commerce Department puts the companies on a so-called Entity List for acting contrary to American foreign policy interests. The blacklist effectively bars U.S. firms from selling technology to the Chinese companies without government approval.

Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said in a written



This Thursday, Jan. 10, 2019, file photo, shows the iFlytek Easy Trans 2.0 Portable Smart Electronic Voice Language Translator device, a 2-way electronic pocket voice translator for a variety of languages, on display at CES International in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

## EU police: Cybercrime threats now focus on profits, data

**THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP)** — Cybercriminals are using new technology and exploiting existing online vulnerabilities as they shift their focus to larger and more profitable targets, the European Union's police agency said in a report published Wednesday. Europol said in its annual Internet Organized Crime Threat Assessment report that since digital data is a key target "data security and consumer awareness are paramount for organizations."

"While we must look ahead to anticipate what challenges new technologies, legislation, and criminal innovation may bring, we must not forget to look behind us," Europol Executive Director Catherine De Bolle said. "New' threats continue to emerge from vulnerabilities in established processes and technologies." The report, which is intended to give police and policy makers an overview of cybercrime trends, also referred to what the authors called "data overload" in efforts to counter online images of child sexual abuse. Improvements in "deep fake" technology that can make it appear as if some-



This Friday Jan. 11, 2013 file photo of a member of the Cybercrime Center as he turns on the light in a lab during a media tour at the occasion of the official opening of the Cybercrime Center at Europol headquarters in The Hague, Netherlands.

Associated Press

one is saying something or acting in a way they aren't also "could be of concern for online child sexual exploitation," according to the report.

Enhanced cooperation between law enforcement agencies, computer security teams and others is the key to tackling major cyberattacks, the report said. While the number of cyberattacks is declining, perpetrators are concentrating on "more profitable targets and greater economic damage," the report warned.

Ransomware remains the top threat, it said.

International police organization Interpol also warned Wednesday of an increasingly practiced form of cybercrime.

Interpol launched a public awareness campaign focused on scams known as "business email compromise," or BEC, in which employees receive requests for money in emails purportedly sent from within their own companies.

"With more than \$1 billion lost to BEC fraud last year alone, this relatively unknown crime is fast becoming a global phenomenon," said Craig Jones, Interpol's director of cybercrime. □

statement Monday that the U.S. government "will not tolerate the brutal suppression of ethnic minorities within China."

The blacklisted companies include Hikvision and Dahua, both of which are global providers of video surveillance technology. Hikvision said in a statement Monday that it respects human rights and strongly opposes the Trump administration's decision. The company said it has spent a year trying to "clarify misunderstandings about the company and address their concerns," and that this will hurt its U.S. business partners.

Prominent Chinese AI firms such as Sense Time, Megvii and iFlytek are also on the list. Sense Time and Megvii are known for the development of computer vision technology that underpins facial recognition products, while iFlytek is known for its voice recognition and translation services.

The companies are among 28 organizations added to the blacklist Monday. Along with the tech companies, the Commerce Department's filing targets local government agencies in China's northwestern Xinjiang region.

The filing said the listed groups have been implicated in "China's campaign of repression, mass arbitrary detention, and high-technology surveillance"

against Uighurs, Kazakhs and other predominantly Muslim minority groups.

Geng Shuang, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman, said the U.S. has no right to interfere in Xinjiang's internal affairs and denied there are human rights issues in the region.

"This kind of behavior seriously violates the basic norms of international relations, interferes in China's internal affairs, and harms China's interests," he said. "The Chinese side strongly deplores and opposes it."

Megvii said Tuesday there are "no grounds" for including the company in the blacklist. Megvii said it received no revenue from projects in Xinjiang in the six months through June 30.

"We believe our inclusion on the list reflects a misunderstanding of our company," said a Megvii statement. The Trump administration earlier this year used the same blacklisting process to punish Huawei, the Chinese telecom giant targeted by the U.S. over national security concerns. Added to the list in June were five Chinese groups working in supercomputing.

Ross said Monday's action will ensure U.S. technologies "are not used to repress defenseless minority populations."

China is estimated to have detained up to 1 million Muslims in prison-like detention centers in the region. The detentions come on top of harsh travel restrictions and a massive surveillance network equipped with facial recognition technology. China has denied committing abuses in the centers and has described them as schools aimed at providing employable skills and combating extremism. □





## European Central Bank minority opposed bond-buying stimulus

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP)

— European Central Bank officials haggled extensively over several parts of the stimulus package decided at their last meeting, with dissenters objecting to bond purchases that pump newly created money into the economy.

The written account of the meeting released Thursday backed up recent evidence of an unusual amount of opposition to a key decision at the Sept. 12 meeting — divisions that could be a challenge for incoming ECB head Christine Lagarde.

The account says that "all members" agreed on the need for some kind of additional stimulus for the 19-country eurozone economy.

But "a number of members assessed the case for renewed asset purchases as not sufficiently strong," according to the account.

The dissident members were quoted as saying that bond purchases would either be ineffective or should be held back as a last resort.



The European Central Bank is seen next to the river Main in Frankfurt, Germany, late Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2019.

Associated Press

The 25-member governing council in the end decided by "clear majority" to start 20 billion euros (\$22 billion) in purchases a month and to cut a key interest benchmark, the rate on deposits the ECB takes from commercial banks, to minus 0.5% from minus 0.4%. The bank also said it would

keep rates low indefinitely until inflation is clearly coming back in line with the bank's goal of just under 2%.

Some members pushed for a different wording for the interest rate promise or for an even bigger rate cut but without the bond purchases. Others opposed

any rate cut.

The export-focused eurozone economy is suffering a drop in growth due to the trade dispute between the U.S. and China, among other things. Yet with market interest rates already very low after years of central bank stimulus efforts, a debate has broken out about

how much difference another blast of monetary support will make. Many bonds issued by eurozone governments, for instance, trade at negative interest yields.

Several ECB council members have publicly expressed disagreement with the extent of the stimulus package backed by President Mario Draghi. They included Klaas Knot from the Netherlands and Jens Weidmann of Germany, while German official Sabine Lautenschlaeger, a member of the top six-member executive committee that runs the bank day to day, voiced opposition to bond purchases ahead of the meeting and resigned afterward - more than two years before the end of her term - without publicly stating a reason.

"It is not the first time in ECB history that there have been dissenting voices in the Governing Council, but they have rarely been as loud and persistent as they are now," said Carsten Brzeski, chief economist for Germany at ING. □

## Stocks move broadly higher on trade talk optimism

By DAMIAN J. TROISE

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Stocks moved broadly higher in early trading Thursday as investors wait to see whether the U.S. and China make any progress in negotiations aimed at ending their ongoing trade war.

The markets were encouraged by an early tweet from President Donald Trump saying that China wants to make a deal, though he did not say whether he was also willing to come to an agreement.

Envoys from each nation start their 13th round of trade negotiations Thursday since the feud started 15 months ago. Markets have been jittery all week as investors continue to assess the potential for a deal amid the latest escalation from the U.S. and China's recent rifts with the NBA and U.S. companies over free-speech issues.

Apple and Microsoft led the technology sector higher. The sector is particularly sensitive to any news coming out of trade negotiations because many of the companies rely on China for sales growth and supply chains.

Bank of America rose 1.6% and led bank stocks higher. The sector benefited rising bond yields on a report showing inflation was muted in September. Higher yields allow banks to charge more lucrative interest on loans.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 1.63% from 1.58% late Wednesday.

Energy companies benefited from a rise in crude oil prices.

Investors backed away from safe-play sectors in another sign that they were feeling optimistic about economic growth. Utilities and real estate companies fell.

**KEEPING SCORE:** The S&P 500 rose 0.6% as of 10 a.m. Eastern time. The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 157 points, or 0.6%, to 26,501. The Nasdaq rose 0.7%.

**OVERSEAS:** Stocks in Europe edged lower. Britain said that economic growth held up in the three months through August and it will avoid running into a recession in the run-up to its exit from the European Union. Economic growth remains

a concern and top European Central Bank officials are united over the need for more economic stimulus, according to the written account of their last meeting.

Asian markets were mixed as the U.S. and China head into a new round of trade negotiations.


**FRESH SHEETS:** Bed Bath & Beyond surged 27% after the struggling home goods chain named Target's former chief merchandising

officer to be its new CEO and president. Mark Tritton, a 30-year-retail industry veteran, will assume the top role on Nov. 4 and succeed interim CEO Mary A. Winston. □




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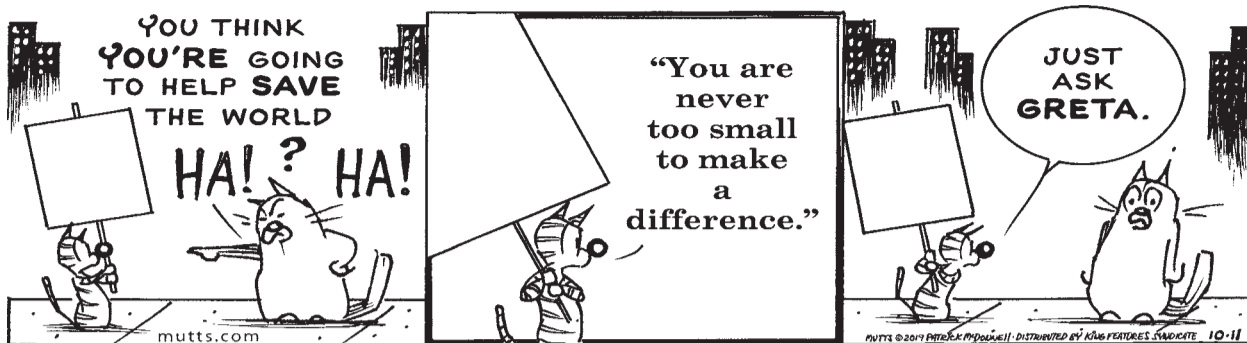
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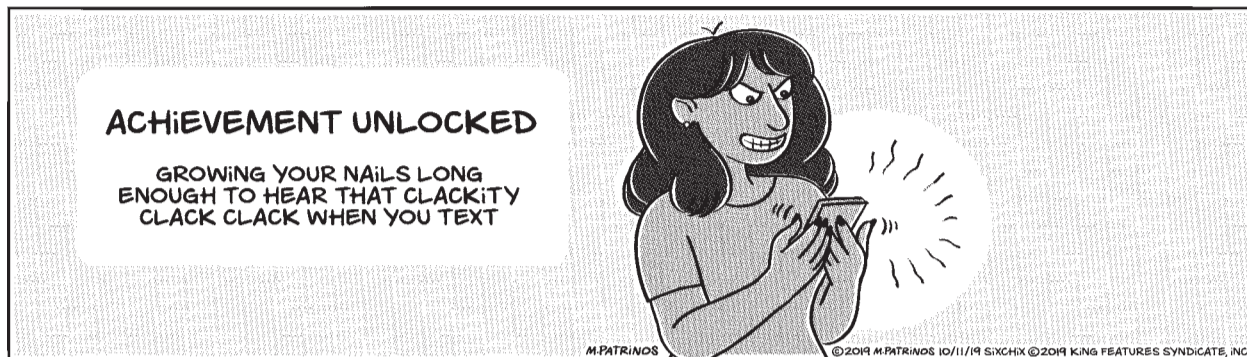
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**6 Chix**



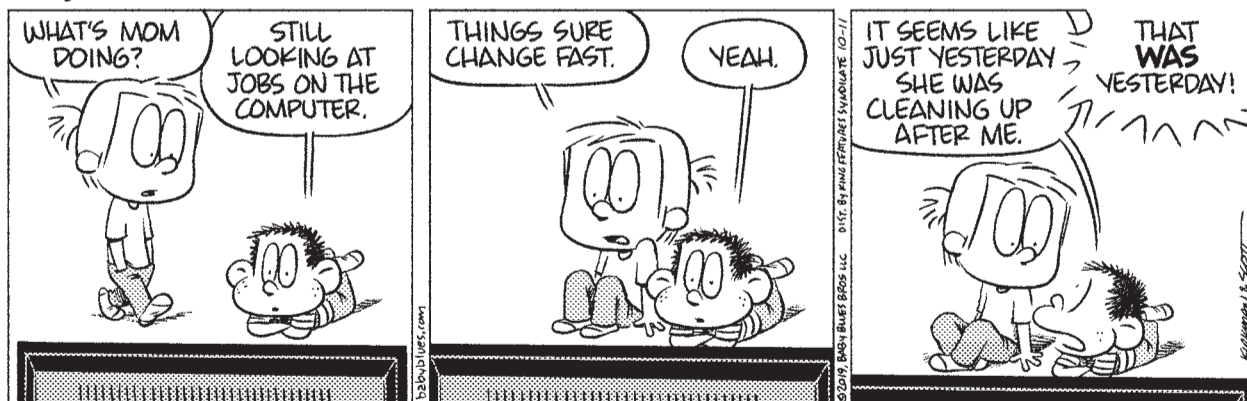
**Blondie**



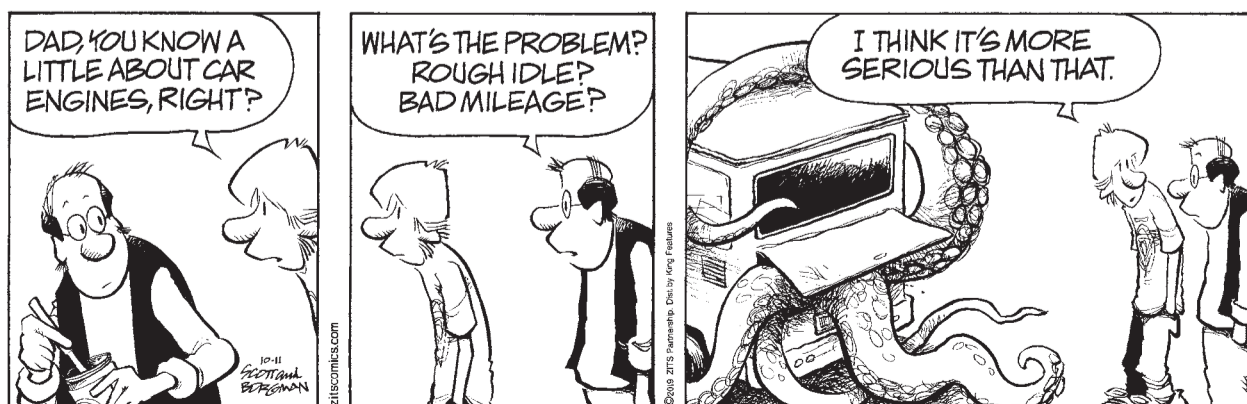
**Mother Goose & Grimm**



**Baby Blues**



**Zits**



**Conceptis Sudoku**

			5			2		
6	1					9	5	
7			4	9	3			
					2			
8	7				5		4	
	2							
	4	8	3			5		
5	2					6	8	
9			1					

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 10/11

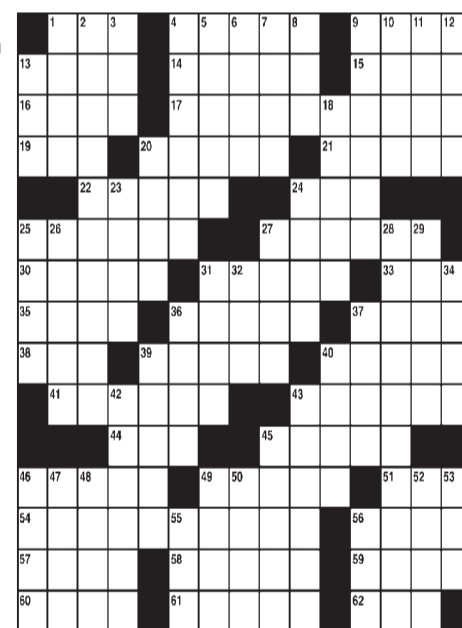
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

3	9	5	4	6	8	2	1	7
1	6	2	9	3	7	4	8	5
8	4	7	1	2	5	9	3	6
6	7	4	8	1	2	3	5	9
5	3	8	7	9	4	6	2	1
2	1	9	6	5	3	8	7	4
7	8	6	2	4	1	5	9	3
4	2	3	5	7	9	1	6	8
9	5	1	3	8	6	7	4	2

**ACROSS**

- 1 \_\_\_ on; watch from hiding
- 4 Donkeys
- 9 Tap the horn
- 13 "How \_\_\_ you!"; cry of outrage
- 14 Verizon store purchase
- 15 "All roads lead to \_\_\_"
- 16 \_\_\_ mitts; pot holders
- 17 Crushed into powder
- 19 Bering or Black
- 20 "Yankee Doodle \_\_\_"
- 21 Unwraps
- 22 Train tracks
- 24 Gigger's letters
- 25 Trash can
- 27 Least risky
- 30 Second U.S. president
- 31 Incites to action
- 33 Soil, after a rainstorm
- 35 Victories
- 36 Hard hits
- 37 Old Maid or Crazy Eights
- 38 Piece of wood
- 39 Gets bigger
- 40 \_\_\_ Rouge, LA
- 41 Deodorant brand
- 43 Meager
- 44 Chop down
- 45 Piece of furniture
- 46 See eye to eye
- 49 Wading bird
- 51 Primary color
- 54 Professional writer
- 56 Dishonest one
- 57 Mayberry's sheriff
- 58 Adhesive
- 59 All at \_\_\_; suddenly
- 60 Become dizzy
- 61 Rough woolen fabric
- 62 Word of disgust



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 10/11/19

**DOWN**

- 1 Put money aside
- 2 Set up in advance
- 3 Japan's currency
- 4 Horrify
- 5 Gives the cold shoulder to
- 6 Auctioneer's cry
- 7 Covetousness
- 8 Notice
- 9 Batter's delight
- 10 Leak out
- 11 Foreboding sign
- 12 Turner & Knight
- 13 Uno, \_\_, tres...
- 18 House tops
- 20 Croaks
- 23 Gives a gun to
- 24 Boys
- 25 Cry hard
- 26 Spanish farewell
- 27 Plants
- 28 Just a small amount
- 29 Radiation's target
- 31 Story line
- 32 Tough \_\_\_ to hoe; difficult task

**Thursday's Puzzle Solved**

I	D	E	A	C	A	T	C	H	S	T	A	G	
T	E	X	T	A	L	O	H	A	T	O	N	O	
C	L	A	M	S	I	M	I	L	A	R	I	T	Y
H	A	S	N	I	C	E	B	A	L	S	A		
P	H	O	N	E	J	A	I						
P	S	E	U	D	O	P	I	C	N	I	C		
E	A	R	N	S	C	H	A	L	K	M	A	C	
S	L	A	T	S	H	A	L	L	S	P	R	Y	
T	A	T	B	L	A	D	E	W	I	R	E	S	
D	E	T	O	U	R	L	A	T	E	S			
A	U	G	S	A	L	E	S						
S	H	R	U	G	G	A	W	K	S	O	B		
N	E	I	G	H	B	O	R	L	I	D	I	V	E
A	R	C	H	A	L	I	V	E	O	V	E	R	
G	O	A	T	D	E	T	E	R	T	E	N	T	

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- 34 Declare untrue
- 36 Make beer
- 37 Boldness; nerve
- 39 Inexperienced
- 40 Baseball's Ruth
- 42 Ladd or Tieg
- 43 Breathed heavily
- 45 Take just one bite
- 46 Not quite closed
- 47 "\_\_\_ with the Wind"
- 48 Impolite
- 49 Talon
- 50 Get up
- 52 Apiece
- 53 Rap's Dr. \_\_\_
- 55 Isn't \_\_\_ to; probably won't
- 56 Gehrig or Ferrigno

# Jumping the shark? Kiss will play for them in the ocean

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP)

— Having played nearly every corner of the Earth in a nearly 50-year career, the rock band Kiss is taking its show to a new place — under the sea, where they will perform for great white sharks and eight fans separated from them by a small submarine.

As part of a promotion by Airbnb, the fans and Kiss will travel Nov. 18 in separate boats off the coast of southern Australia. While Kiss stays above board on one vessel, the fans will be lowered beneath the surface of the water from a second boat into the viewing sub in an area known for shark activity.

Using underwater speakers, Kiss will begin playing, and the sound will be audible to the submerged fans and the sharks.

"I was a little taken aback by it, but they explained that sharks are attracted to low frequencies and so they're attracted to rock 'n' roll," singer and guitarist Paul Stanley told The Associated Press. "Since we're going to be in Australia, it gives a whole new meaning to doing a concert down under."

The first-come, first-served event costs \$50, which is half the price of Kiss tickets in even the worst nose-bleed seats in the last row at Madison Square Garden. Proceeds will go to

charity, the company said. Reservations can be made starting at 6 p.m. EDT on [airbnb.com/KISS](http://airbnb.com/KISS) on Oct. 14.

The event will take place in the Indian Ocean off Port Lincoln, South Australia. Kiss will be in full makeup and costumes for the performance, which will be at least four songs.

"I'm not sure how much of us the sharks can take," Stanley said. "I'm hoping they know 'Rock And Roll All Nite.'"

Stanley said Kiss bassist Gene Simmons has recovered after having some kidney stones removed recently, and should be ready to perform well before the shark show.

"I tend to think he just ate gravel," Stanley joked.

The event is part of Airbnb Animal Experiences, and is designed to have people entertain animals instead of the other way around, the company said in a news release.

As strange as it sounds, underwater concerts are not new. The Underwater Music Festival has been held for the past 35 years in the Florida Keys.

The shark show has untapped potential if they want to do it again sometime. After all, what other concert could potentially bring together Great White and Air Supply? □

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2 BR Ocean View \$7000  
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### Renaissance Suites

1 BR WK 32 and 35 \$2750 each  
3rd floor pool/ ocean view

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# California bans pesticide linked to brain damage in children

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A widely used agricultural pesticide that California environmental officials have said has been linked to brain damage in children will be banned after next year under an agreement reached with the manufacturer, state officials announced Wednesday.

Under the deal, all California sales of chlorpyrifos will end on Feb. 6, 2020, and farmers will have until the end of 2020 to exhaust their supplies.

The pesticide is used on numerous crops in the nation's largest agriculture-producing state — including alfalfa, almonds, citrus, cotton, grapes and walnuts.

State regulators have said chlorpyrifos has been linked to health defects in children, including brain impairment, and to illnesses in others with compromised immune systems.

"For years, environmental justice advocates have fought to get the harmful pesticide chlorpyrifos out of our communities," Gov. Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, said in a statement



In this May 13, 2004, file photo, worker Roberto Rosiles picks fruit at a Sand Hills Farms orchard in Arvin, Calif.

after the deal was announced.

He added: "Thanks to their tenacity and the work of countless others, this will now occur faster than originally envisioned. This is a big win for children, workers and public health in

California."

The president of the California Citrus Association, which represents about 5,000 growers, said in an interview that he believes the risks were not as great as the state made them out to be.

"We really thought the exposure assessments and risks were just inflated and it wasn't a true characterization of the protections that were already in place," said Casey Creamer.

Creamer added he appreciated that officials have

Associated Press

agreed to budget \$5.6 million to help pesticide manufacturers develop a safer alternative to chlorpyrifos. "But just so you're aware, that's what agriculture does every day, we're always looking for new products, safer products that are effective," he said.

When California announced earlier this year it was moving toward banning the pesticide, the state's environmental secretary, Jared Blumenfeld, said it was doing so because the federal government was allowing it to remain on the market.

"The swift end to the sale of chlorpyrifos protects vulnerable communities by taking a harmful pesticide off the market," Blumenfeld said after Wednesday's announcement.

Blumenfeld said the agreement reached with chlorpyrifos' manufacturer, Corteva Agriscience, "avoids a protracted legal process while providing a clear timeline for California farmers as we look toward developing alternative pest management practices." □

# EPA proposes rewrite of rules on lead contamination in water



In this Nov. 8, 2018, file photo, a lead pipe, left, is seen in a hole the kitchen ceiling in the home of Desmond Odom, in Newark, N.J.

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration on Thursday proposed a rewrite of rules for dealing with lead pipes contaminating drinking water, but critics say the changes appear to give water systems decades more time to replace pipes leaching dangerous amounts of toxic lead.

Contrary to regulatory rollbacks in many other environmental areas, the administration has called dealing with lead contamination in drinking water a priority. Communities and families in Flint, Michigan, Newark, New Jersey, and elsewhere have had to grapple with high levels of lead in tap water and with regulatory failures dealing with the health threat.

Lead in drinking water has been linked to developmental delays in children and can damage the

brain, red blood cells and kidneys. It is most often caused by lead service lines — pipes connecting a home to a water main — or lead fixtures in a home or school.

At a news conference in Green Bay, Wisconsin, Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Andrew Wheeler announced changes that include requiring water systems to test lead levels in water at schools and child care facilities. Other changes would require officials to identify the areas with the worst contamination and toughen procedures for sampling tap water.

But Wheeler disappointed conservation groups by declining to lower the level of lead contamination in drinking water systems that triggers mandatory remediation. And another change would lower the amount of

lead pipe that water systems have to replace each year once the threshold is hit, cutting it from 7% to 3%. That, according to Eric Olson at the Natural Resources Defense Council conservation group, would give water utilities about 20 more years to fully replace all the lead pipes in a contaminated system.

Wheeler said a series of other, smaller changes in the new proposals are expected to offset that. Overall, he argued, the rule changes, if the White House ultimately adopts them, would mean leaking old lead pipes are "replaced at a much faster rate than ever before."

Betsy Southerland, a senior EPA water official under the Obama administration, said the new proposals fail to boost the urgency of the country's rules, issued in 1991, for cleaning up lead in water systems. □

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# 'We're not alone' - 'Sesame Street' tackles addiction crisis

By MARK KENNEDY

Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — "Sesame Street" is taking a new step to try to help kids navigate life in America — it's tackling the opioid crisis.

Sesame Workshop is exploring the backstory of Karli, a bright green, yellow-haired friend of Elmo's whose mother is battling addiction. The initiative is part of the Sesame Street in Communities resources available online.

"Sesame Street" creators said they turned to the issue of addiction since data shows 5.7 million children under age 11 live in households with a parent with substance use disorder.

"There's nothing else out there that addresses substance abuse for young, young kids from their perspective," said Kama Einhorn, a senior content manager with Sesame Workshop. It's also a chance to model to adults a way to explain what they're going through to kids and to offer simple strategies to cope.

"Even a parent at their most vulnerable — at the worst of their struggle — can take one thing away when they watch it with their kids, then that serves the purpose," Einhorn said.

This summer in Manhattan, The Associated Press looked on as puppeteers, producers and show creators crammed into a small studio in the nonprofit's Manhattan headquarters to tape some of the upcoming segments.

Karli, voiced and manipulated by puppeteer Haley Jenkins, was joined by a young girl — 10-year-old Salia Woodbury, whose parents are in recovery.

"Hi, it's me, Karli. I'm here with my friend Salia. Both of our parents have had the same problem — addiction," Karli told the camera. "My mom and dad told me that addiction is a sickness," Salia said.

"Yeah, a sickness that makes people feel like they have to take drugs or drink alcohol to feel OK. My mom was having a hard time with addiction and I felt like my family was the only one



This undated image released by Sesame Workshop shows 10-year-old Salia Woodbury, whose parents are in recovery, with "Sesame Street" character Karli.

Associated Press

going through it. But now I've met so many other kids like us. It makes me feel like we're not alone," the puppet continued.

"Right, we're not alone," Salia responded. "And it's OK to open up to people about our feelings."

In the segment, Karli and Salia each hold up hand-drawn pictures of flowers, with multiple petals representing "big feelings" — like anger, sadness and happiness. They offer ways to feel better, including art and breathing exercises.

The segment leans on carefully considered language. Creators prefer "addiction" to "substance abuse" and "recovery" to "sobriety" because those terms are clearer to children. Despite the subject, the mood was light in the room, largely thanks to Jenkins' calm and empathic manner.

"I know it feels awkward because people don't normally have conversations standing shoulder-to-shoulder," she told Salia between takes.

"This is weird, but trust me, it

looks good."

Karli had already been introduced as a puppet in foster care earlier this year but viewers now will understand why her mother had to go away for a while. The introduction of her backstory follows other attempts by entertainment companies to explore the issues of addiction, including "The Connors" on ABC and "Euphoria" on HBO.

The online-only segments with Karli and Salia are augmented with ones that feature Elmo's dad, Louie,

explaining that addiction is a sickness, and Karli telling Elmo and Chris about her mom's special adult meetings and her own kids' ones. Karli also opens up about her family to Abby Cadabby in another segment, and Karli tells Elmo about how she mistakenly used to feel like her mom's addiction was her fault. Karli, Elmo, Rosita and Abby Cadabby also sing "We're Special and So Are You." Viewers are referred to free online resources in both English and Spanish that include videos, storybooks, digital interactives and games.

Children's therapist Jerry Moe, the national director of the Hazelden Betty Ford Children's Program, helped craft the segments and resources, saying he was grateful to help since there's been a paucity of resources for the preschool age-group.

"These boys and girls are the first to get hurt and, unfortunately, the last to get help," he said. "For them to see Karli and learn that it's not their fault and this stuff is hard to talk about and it's OK to have these feelings, that's important. And that there's hope."

"Sesame Street," which began airing in 1969, has a long history of tackling topical issues in a way approachable to children. □

## Review: Author crafts glimpse into the future in 'Synapse'

By JEFF AYERS

"Synapse" (Thomas Nelson), by Steven James

In "Synapse" by Steven James, it is 30 years into the future and artificial intelligence has advanced to the point where robots called Artificials can look human and can be programmed to experience pain and emotion. People pay for these companions for emotional support. The robots are indistinguishable from humans at a casual glance, and marriage laws have recently been passed allowing unions between humans and Artificials.

Kestrel Hathaway is devastated when she loses her

baby during childbirth. On her way home from the hospital she witnesses a terrorist attack and is able to save the life of one of the bystanders. When she arrives home, she learns that her brother, who works for the company that creates the Artificials, has given her one as a gift. She returns it, but changes her mind when she realizes she needs to talk to someone about her grief.

The name of the Artificial is Jordan, and he's not like the other ones of his kind. Once he's activated, he begins to question what it means to exist. Is there a God? And does he have a

soul? What constitutes a living being?

"Synapse" isn't a reread of the Pinocchio story with the character wanting to be a real boy. It's the story of a created being that asks hard existential questions. Jordan's pursuit of answers makes the reader contemplate deep philosophical questions as well. What does it mean to be truly alive? What makes someone truly human?

The author has crafted a glimpse of a future when mankind and computer technology fully merge. He immerses the characters into a tense thriller, creating a unique and

thought-provoking reading experience. □



This cover image released by Thomas Nelson shows "Synapse" by Steven James.

Associated Press



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Benedict Wong, left, and Will Smith in a scene from the Ang Lee film "Gemini Man."

Associated Press

## The tech is advanced, but 'Gemini Man' is lifeless

By **LINDSEY BAHR**  
Associated Press

Will Smith is usually an asset for a movie. He's the kind of true movie star whose charisma can elevate even the most mediocre material. You'd think then that it would be a good thing to have not just one but two Will Smiths in a movie if you can. That was at least part of the idea behind "Gemini Man." The action film from Ang Lee also uses state of the art de-aging technology to create a basically believable 20-something version of Smith and has billed itself as a "true event film" that "redefines action cinema."

Those are some lofty claims, but unfortunately its biggest accomplishment seems to be in sapping all the charm out of Smith (twice!). For all the hype about the modern technology, the story is curiously stale and at times feels like a mashup of other, better movies. It makes more sense when you learn that "Gemini Man" was written over 20 years ago and has gone through enough possible directors and stars to fill out a baseball team. Certainly it's been updated

since whatever version was making the rounds in 1997 — "Game of Thrones" showrunner David Benioff shares a story and screenplay credit with Darren Lemke and Billy Ray — but it still has a dated core, and not in a good, self-consciously retro way.

Smith, at his current age, plays Henry Brogan, a talented assassin employed by the U.S. government who just wants to retire. The film begins with his last job: He has to assassinate someone on a full speed bullet train while perched on a hill outside. Brogan is a one-in-a-million sniper, you see, and a bunch of other guys failed where he succeeded.

But of course hanging up his hat afterward for a quiet life of fishing isn't as simple as he hoped. He soon finds out that he's being monitored, and then hunted by his former employers including a bureaucrat played by Linda Emond and a private contractor named Clay Varris (Clive Owen), who is one of the most one-dimensional "bad guys" we've had the privilege of spending time

with in a while.

Henry has no choice but to go on the run, bringing the young agent who was assigned to surveil him, Danny (Mary Elizabeth Winstead), along because, well, there has to be a potential love interest in a movie like this, so why not?

This won't come as a surprise to anyone who has seen any sort of "Gemini Man" marketing, although the movie seems to think it is a surprise, but they soon discover that the person Henry's being hunted by is a much younger version of himself. "Junior" (a de-aged Smith) is part of a shadowy program run by Varris called Gemini. The construct of "he knows every move I'm going to make" is an interesting one, but this film barely does anything with it. It's too busy inexplicably continent hopping and giving Winstead, Smith and Benedict Wong one-liners even they can't sell. Lee once again is using the high frame rate he deployed in "Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk" (which I liked more than most) but it's even more distracting this time around. □

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SUN 2:10 | 4:50 | 7:30  
3D VERSION  
PH MON-FRI 6:10 | 8:50  
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MON-SUN 12:55 | 6:05 | FRI-SAT 3:30 | 8:40 | 11:05  
PBP VIT MON-SUN 1:40 | 4:15 | 6:50 | 9:25

**ROGUE WARFARE**  
WILL YUN LEE | JERMAINE LOVE  
PH MON-FRI 4:20 | 6:45 | 9:10  
SAT-SUN 1:55 | 4:20 | 6:45 | 9:10

**JOKER**  
JOAQUIN PHOENIX | ROBERT DE NIRO  
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES  
PH VIT MON-FRI 6:05 | 8:50  
SAT-SUN 3:20 | 6:05 | 8:50  
PH MON-THU 4:45 | 7:30  
FRI 4:45 | 7:30 | 10:15  
SAT 2:00 | 4:45 | 7:30 | 10:15  
SUN 2:00 | 4:45 | 7:30  
PBP MON-THU & SUN 3:10 | 5:50 | 8:30  
FRI-SAT 3:10 | 5:50 | 8:30 | 11:10  
PBP VIT MON-SUN 1:20 | 4:00 | 6:40 | 9:20

**10 MINUTES GONE**  
BRUCE WILLIS | MICHAEL CHIKLIS  
PBP MON-THU & SUN 9:35  
FRI-SAT 9:35 | 11:40

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CHLOE BENNET | ALBERT TSAI  
WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES  
PH MON-FRI 4:00 | 6:15  
SAT-SUN 1:50 | 4:00 | 6:15  
PBP MON-SUN 12:55 | 3:05 | 5:15 | 7:25

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SYLVESTER STALLONE | PAZ VEGA  
PH MON-THU & SUN 8:30  
FRI-SAT 8:30 | 10:40  
PBP MON-THU & SUN 1:10 | 3:15 | 5:20 | 7:25 | 9:30  
FRI-SAT 1:10 | 3:15 | 5:20 | 7:25 | 9:30 | 11:35

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## Michael Sweet goes to 11 on 'Ten'



This cover image released by Rat Pak Records shows "Ten," a release by Michael Sweet.  
Associated Press

By **WAYNE PARRY**  
Associated Press

Michael Sweet, "Ten" (Rat Pak)  
It's called "Ten," but this goes to 11. This album is among the best work Michael Sweet has ever done, and that's saying quite a bit given his

nine previous solo albums and extensive discography with the trailblazing Christian heavy metal band Stryper.

It almost seems like the high-octave vocalist and guitar maniac is keeping '80s heavy metal alive all on his own, given his frenetic output and the consistent quality of each release. His 10th solo album begins with a heavy dose of transplanted Stryper DNA on "Better Part of Me," which is built around the intro riff from 1986's "More Than A Man." It's remarkable how well Sweet's voice has held up over nearly four decades, with scant rest between discs and tours. A time-honored tradition of '80s metal is the power bal-

lad, and no one does them better than Sweet. This time it's "Let It Be Love," a worthy successor to the MTV smash "Honestly" and 1990's "Lady."

Sweet also brings in a truckload of metal friends, including cameos from members of Whitesnake, L.A. Guns, Fozzy and Arch Enemy. "Son of Man," a duet with Todd La Torre of Queensryche, is everything a heavy metal song should be: fast-paced, drum-heavy and with unfathomably shredding guitar by Andy James. It sounds like what might be expected if Sweet sang with Motorhead while Yngwie Malmsteen played guitar. It all adds up: "Ten" is easily one of the best hard rock albums of 2019. □

# Olga Tokarczuk, Peter Handke win Nobel literature prizes

Associated Press

**STOCKHOLM (AP)** — Polish novelist Olga Tokarczuk and Austrian author Peter Handke — two writers whose works are deeply intertwined in Europe's religious, ethnic and social fault lines — won the 2018 and 2019 Nobel Prizes for literature on Thursday.

The rare double announcement came after no literature prize was awarded last year due to sex-abuse allegations that tarnished the Swedish Academy, which awards the literature prize. Yet if prize organizers hoped to get through this year's awards without controversy, they will likely be disappointed.

The Swedish Academy called Handke "one of the most influential writers in Europe" after World War II and praised his work for exploring "the periphery and the specificity of human experience" with linguistic ingenuity.

But the 76-year-old author has long faced criticism for his vigorous defense of the Serbs during the 1990s wars that devastated the Balkans as Yugoslavia disintegrated. He spoke at the 2006 funeral of former Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic, who at the time was facing war crimes charges, calling him "a rather tragic man."

Handke — who once called for the Nobel Prize to be abolished — said he was "astonished" to receive the award.

"I never thought they would choose me," Handke told reporters outside his home near Paris.

"It was very courageous by the Swedish academy, this kind of decision," he added. "These are good people."

If Handke's victory caused uncomfortable ripples, the choice of Tokarczuk was welcomed by liberal-minded authors and readers in her native Poland and beyond.

The 57-year-old novelist is one of Poland's best-known authors, known for her humanist themes and playful, subversive streak. The academy said she



In this Feb. 12, 2017 photo Polish author Olga Tokarczuk speaks during a press conference in Berlin, Germany.

was chosen for works that explore the "crossing of boundaries as a form of life."

Beginning with his first novel, "The Hornets," in 1966, Handke made his name with works that combine introspection and a provocative streak. One early play was called "Offending the Audience" and featured actors insulting theatergoers.

He has written screenplays, several of them for German director Wim Wenders, who also filmed Handke's 1970 novel "The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick."

He was praised by the Swedish Academy for writing powerfully about catastrophe, notably in "A Sorrow Beyond Dreams," his 1972 autobiographical novel about his mother's suicide.

But his staunch support of the Serbs during the 1990s Balkans wars has set him at odds with many other Western intellectuals.

In a 1996 essay, "Justice for Serbia," Handke accused Western news media of depicting Serbs as aggressors in the wars that led to the breakup of Yugoslavia. He denied that genocide was committed when Bosnian

Serb troops massacred some 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys in the enclave of Srebrenica in 1995, and was an opponent of NATO's airstrikes against Serbia for that country's violent crackdown in Kosovo in the late 1990s. In an interview with Serbia's state TV earlier this year Handke said those behind the bombing "don't belong to Europe and the planet Earth."

Handke's views led novelist Salman Rushdie in 1999 to call him a contender for "International Moron of the Year." Rushdie's publicist at Penguin Random House said Thursday that Rushdie stood by what he wrote in 1999.

In 2006, Handke turned down the Heinrich Heine award from the German city of Duesseldorf after his selection sparked a row among the city's politicians. His selection as winner of the International Ibsen Award for drama in 2014 also prompted protests from human rights groups. The same year, he told the Austrian Press Agency that the Nobel Prize should be abolished because of its "false canonization" of literature.

Tokarczuk has been attacked by Polish conservatives — and received death threats — for criticizing aspects of the country's past, including its episodes of anti-Semitism. She is also a strong critic of Poland's current right-wing government.

Her 2014 novel "The Books of Jacob" tackles the forced conversion of Polish Jews to Catholicism in the 18th century. Her book "Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead" is a crime thriller with feminist and animal-rights themes that offers a sometimes unflattering depiction of small-town Polish life.

She won the Booker International Prize in 2018 for "Flights," which combines tales of modern-day travel with the story of a 17th-century anatomist who dissected his own amputated leg and the journey of composer Frederic Chopin's heart from Paris to Warsaw after his death.

Poland's Culture Minister Piotr Glinski, who said earlier this week that he has not finished any of Tokarczuk's books, tweeted his congratulations and said he now felt obliged to go back and read her books

all the way through.

Polish President Andrzej Duda called it a "great day for Polish literature" on Twitter.

Tokarczuk is only the 15th woman to win the Nobel literature prize in more than a century. Of the 11 Nobels awarded so far this week, all the other laureates have been men.

Both winners will receive a full cash prize, valued this year at 9 million kronor (\$918,000), a gold medal and a diploma.

The literature prize was canceled last year after an exodus of members from the exclusive Swedish Academy, which chooses the winners, following sex-abuse allegations. Jean-Claude Arnault, the husband of a former academy member, was convicted last year of two rapes in 2011.

The Nobel Foundation had warned that another group could award the literature prize if the academy didn't improve its tarnished image, but said in March it was satisfied the Swedish Academy had revamped itself and restored trust.

The 2018 and 2019 awards were chosen by the Swedish Academy's Nobel Committee, a new body made up of four academy members and five "external specialists." Nobel organizers say the committee suggests two names that then must be approved by the Swedish Academy. It's unclear whether academy members simply rubber-stamped the experts' choice.

Anders Olsson, chair of the Swedish Academy's Nobel Committee, said "we are not ready to evaluate this new process yet."

In his will, Swedish industrialist and dynamite inventor Alfred Nobel designated the Swedish Academy as the institution responsible for the Nobel Prize in literature. Nobel decided the physics, chemistry and medicine prizes should be awarded in Stockholm, and the peace prize in Oslo.

The coveted Nobel Peace Prize will be awarded on Friday and the economics award on Monday. □

Associated Press

# Binge eating videos find big audience, even for weight loss

**NEW YORK (AP)** — While trying to lose weight, Becky Beach found assistance in an unlikely place: thousands of online videos featuring people bingeing on massive amounts of ramen, burgers, chicken wings and seafood boils brimming with crab and lobster.

The South Korea-rooted video trend is known as “mukbang,” and it has spread to the U.S. and around the globe on YouTube, Facebook and Instagram.

“I watch one whenever I feel like eating sweets or bad foods,” said Beach, a Dallas-based product designer for a Fortune 500 company. She has lost 10 pounds and views up to three mukbang videos a day. “It’s just satisfying to watch.”

Ashley Cobb, a math teacher in Washington, D.C., is also a fan after one of her eighth-graders turned her on to the videos. Cobb said it’s “fun and soothing” to watch people dip food in sauce and “eat with so much enjoyment.” The footage transports her to “a different place” and “has a way of making you leave reality for a second, sort of like a good book.”

Such glowing feedback is pure gold to top creators like Bethany Gaskin in suburban Cincinnati. The 44-year-old, who has 2.2 million subscribers to her Bloveslife channel on YouTube, is a top earner, clearing more than \$1 million in ad money as she eats her way through seafood boils, ginormous servings of barbecue ribs and other drool-worthy spreads.

She recently put out a Cajun butter dipping sauce, Bloves Smackalicious, and counts Cardi B and Amber Rose among her 1.1 million followers on Instagram.

“I started off trying to cook in videos,” Gaskin said. “I cook really well, then people wanted to see me eat. I unapologetically eat whatever I want, however I want, food dripping down my chin.”

Gaskin has some advice for critics who say the excess of mukbang promotes an unhealthy lifestyle: “If you



This image from video released by Nate Gaskin shows Bethany Gaskin, 44, who has 2.2 million subscribers to her Bloveslife channel on YouTube.

Associated Press

don’t like it, don’t watch.” The word mukbang is a mashup of the Korean words for “eating” and “broadcast,” translating in English to “eatcast.” Livestreams in South Korea started sprouting up around 2009. It didn’t take long for fans to catch on and YouTubers to cash in. “The core principle behind mukbang is that eating is a social activity,” said Victor Chang, marketing manager for the South Korea-based fried chicken restaurant chain Bonchon. It’s “a way of connecting people through meals even when they are miles apart.”

The company’s wings appear frequently in videos. The mukbang phenomena

is not focused on fancy food. It’s “more about the ‘treat yourself’ moment and the simple joy of casual conversation over a no-frills, delicious meal,” Chang said.

Some mukbangers avoid speaking in their videos, using specialized microphones to heighten the crunches and slurps. Others like Gaskin are in it for the chatter. Visiting with Gaskin on YouTube as she talks, dips and eats feels like catching up with a neighbor over the backyard fence.

At 4-foot-11 and about 130 pounds, Gaskin said she’s able to put away the amounts of food that she devours on camera due in part to her high metabo-

lism. During a 30-minute video, she said she may actually eat for only 11 to 15 minutes.

Gaskin, who grew up poor in Chicago, was making circuit boards for the military in January 2017, when she put up her first mukbang video. She retired from her day job that May. Her husband, Nate Gaskin, retired after 20 years at General Electric to help manage her mukbang career, which is packed with speaking engagements, Make-a-Wish visits with sick kids and brand deals.

To round out the family affair, their two sons — the youngest is 18 — are also earning incomes from mukbang.

So does Nicholas Perry, 27.

He’s a classically trained violinist who gave up that career struggle for mukbang in 2016. He started with videos focused on the vegan lifestyle he followed for about five years. Then he gave up veganism for junk food-fueled mukbangs that go deep into his personal life. He messily answers viewer questions, burps and chows down with regular “mmm, mmm, mmmms.”

Perry has three mukbang channels under the handle Nikocado Avocado, with 1.72 million subscribers on the largest. He would not reveal how much money he earns.

“One of my friends told me to try it out,” he said from his home outside Philadelphia. “I thought she was crazy. I said to myself, ‘Who on Earth is going to watch me eat food? Sure enough, my very first mukbang got like 50,000 views in a couple of weeks, which was a lot for me at the time, and everybody was asking, when’s the next mukbang?’”

After gaining weight, Perry tries to counter all the fast food with exercise and nutrition off screen.

“I just want to do this for a couple more years,” he said. “It IS very unhealthy.” Brittany Marsicek, 28, a dancer, actor and YouTuber, has a 2-year-old Mukbang Monday channel with Chantal Plamondon, 27. The two focus on vegan food, but Marsicek eats and chats her way through non-vegan videos on some Wednesdays when she goes solo or teams up with her boyfriend.

Marsicek and Plamondon often film in their cars while munching from food containers, rather than making videos featuring a spread of food and people who mostly “just gorge,” Marsicek said.

Consumer psychologist Michal Strahilevitz, an associate professor of marketing at Saint Mary’s College of California, said mukbang “may seem crazy” at first, but “watching people binge eat is a whole lot healthier than binge eating yourself.” □



This image taken from video and released by Nikocado Avocado shows him surrounded by items from fast-food chains Wendy’s and Taco Bell.

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